ONE TEAM. ONE MISSION.

FOREWORD

NEARLY SEVEN YEARS AGO, ON THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON, MY DAUGHTER AMNA WAS BORN. AS MY WIFE SHIVAM AND I WELCOMED HER INTO THE WORLD THAT EVENING IN SEATTLE, WE WATCHED ON TELEVISION AS BARACK OBAMA ACCEPTED THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT.

"It is that American spirit, that American promise, that pushes us forward even when the path is uncertain," he said, "that binds us together in spite of our differences; that makes us fix our eye not on what is seen, but what is unseen—that better place around the bend."

The President's call deeply inspired us, and within a year, Shivam and I moved our growing family to Washington, D.C. In taking that leap, we hoped for, but never could have imagined, the opportunities we would have to serve our country.

At my confirmation hearing to be USAID Administrator, I spoke of my passion for global development and my excitement at leading an Agency whose rich legacy included helping to eradicate smallpox, promote democratic transitions after the Cold War, and save millions of lives from starvation through the Green Revolution. But I also spoke of the struggles and setbacks the mission had endured and the need to rebuild the Agency as the world's premier development institution.

Before I started, I developed a plan for my first 100 days in office so I could learn about the remarkable breadth and depth of our Agency—from its expansive portfolio in Afghanistan to its intricate procurement processes. Five days after I was sworn in, however, my plans and priorities changed in an instant. Early in the evening on January 12, 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Port-au-Prince—reducing Haiti's capital city to rubble and killing 230,000 people.

I still remember that day like it was yesterday. As our ops center came alive, we received rapid updates on efforts to re-establish contact with the Haitian government and assessments of the country's infrastructure to learn if planes could land or ships could dock. Within hours, President Obama announced that USAID would lead a swift, aggressive response that marshaled the full capabilities of the U.S. government.

In the days that followed, our Agency launched one of the largest humanitarian rescue and relief operations in history. Under unyielding pressure and with very little sleep, our teams showed a depth of skill, focus, and compassion that inspired awe.

This strength of purpose and courage of heart is not reserved for times of crisis. In this deeply interconnected world, it is required of us every day. Time and again, we have seen extreme poverty, extreme climate, and extreme corruption push millions to the edge of survival and challenge our own security and prosperity. That is why President Obama has—in three successive State of the Union addresses—called on the United States to lead the world to end extreme poverty in our lifetime. The President's charge reenergized our Agency and elevated our work as part of America's national security agenda.

OUR MISSION

We partner to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity.

Over the last five years, we have seized on this challenge—pioneering a new model of development that harnesses the power of business and innovation to end extreme poverty. I saw its full potential in the months leading up to President Obama's G8 Summit at Camp David in 2012. We had an ambitious vision to bring African countries, private sector players, civil society leaders, and G8 partners together to unlock unprecedented private investment in African agriculture. We called it the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

For months, we worked tirelessly to bring all the partners to the table and shore up real commitments to investment and reform. The weeks were a blur of exhaustion and exhilaration. There was even a marathon day trip to Ethiopia where we negotiated the final terms of their New Alliance commitments. The morning of the G8 Summit, President Obama came to USAID to deliver the first-ever presidential speech on global hunger. He spoke passionately about the moral, economic, and national security imperative to fight hunger and malnutrition. The next day at Camp David, he convened African heads of state and corporate CEOs for a 90-minute discussion on food security.

But what I remember most about those weeks was that when no one thought USAID could get it done, we refused to listen. We refused to lower our aspirations. We came together as one Agency and fundamentally redefined what is possible to achieve in development. Without question, these efforts have alleviated suffering and advanced opportunity in some of the world's poorest and most forgotten communities.

We have the honor of serving a mission and a country that are exceptional and the responsibility to ask ourselves every day how we can get better together. This commitment to excellence and unflinching focus on results serves as the foundation for everything we do—from educating girls to tackling climate change to expanding access to clean water.

Over the last five years, we have brought together captains of industry and committed country reformers to build the geothermal plants and wind farms that will provide clean energy to millions. We have equipped poor farmers from Haiti to Bangladesh with new seeds that thrive in floods, resist drought, and give children the nutrition they need to thrive.

We have helped empower civil society groups from Ukraine to Colombia to tackle corruption and confront injustice. We have brought scientific expertise and new technologies to the fight against Ebola in West Africa, where we have achieved results faster and more profoundly than anyone predicted. Above all, we have proved that development is a discipline driven by evidence, innovation, and partnership. While these efforts rarely garner public recognition, they are quietly making it possible to end extreme poverty in our lifetime.

Every day for the last five years, I have been blessed to serve alongside an extraordinarily talented community of professionals. I am especially grateful for the dedication they have shown one another and the friendships we have forged in the pursuit of something bigger and better than ourselves.

Drawn from more than 80 interviews with our staff around the world, this book is not only a record of an Agency transformed but also a celebration of those who transformed it. In hearing directly from our staff across the globe, I hope you take a moment to reflect on their courage, talent, and commitment to the American people and the communities we serve.

Thank you.

Rajiv Shah

USAID Administrator | February 11, 2015

OUR CORE VALUES

Passion for mission

We come to work to foster sustainable development and advance human dignity globally.

Excellence

We strive to maximize efficiency, effectiveness, and deliver meaningful results across our work.

Integrity

We are honest and transparent, accountable for our efforts, and maintain a consistently high moral standard.

Respect

We demonstrate respect for one another, our partners, and the people we serve in communities around the world.

Empowerment

We elevate all voices striving for global economic, environmental, and social progress.

Inclusion

We value our differences and draw strength from diversity.

Commitment to learning

We seek to improve ourselves and our work through reflection and evaluation.

A NEW MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT

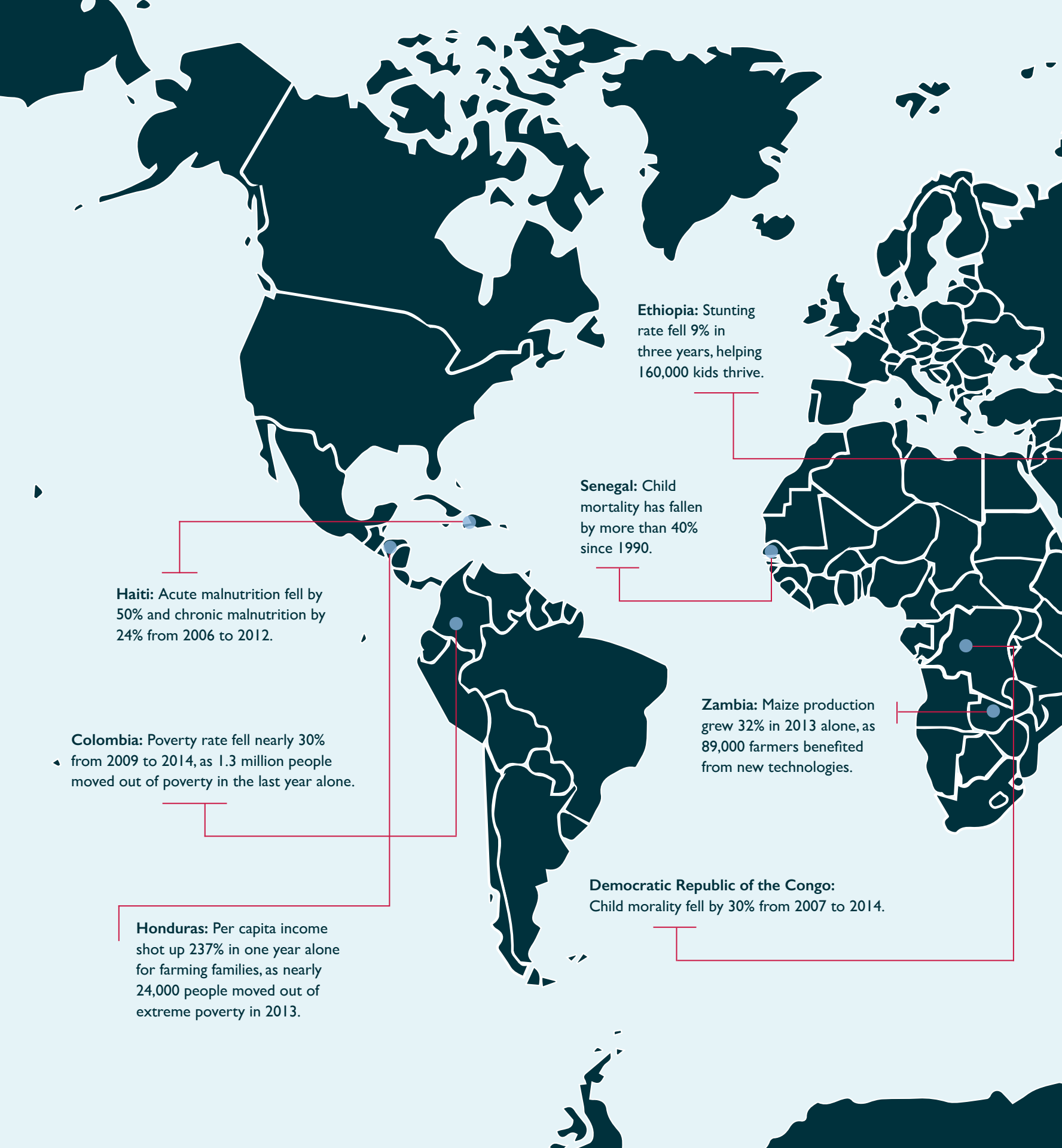
Fighting Hunger: Instead of only giving away food in emergencies, we launched President Obama's Feed the Future initiative to modernize our nation's defining legacy of fighting hunger. We have improved nutrition for 12.5 million children, raised incomes for nearly 7 million farm families, and leveraged more than $10 billion from 200 global and local companies for African agriculture. We have also achieved the most significant reforms in food aid in 60 years thanks to bipartisan leadership, giving us the flexibility to reach 800,000 more hungry children this year.

Ensuring Children Survive and Thrive: Over the last half-century, the global health community has made remarkable progress, as the number of children who die before reaching their 5th birthday has fallen by nearly half. To accelerate this rate of reduction, we narrowed our focus to 24 countries, invested in more than 80 new health innovations, and announced a realignment of $2.9 billion to save the lives of up to half-a-million additional children. Inspired by our shared mission, more than a dozen countries have launched their own data-driven strategies and increased their investments in child and maternal survival.

Expanding Access to Energy: Leveraging America's own energy renaissance, we launched Power Africa to bring sustainable energy access and economic growth to sub-Saharan Africa. Our unique approach has already mobilized more than $20 billion in private sector commitments and helped countries make critical energy sector reforms.

Responding to Disasters: In response to an unprecedented level of humanitarian need, we have set a new standard for agility, speed, and innovation in times of crisis. From Haiti to Syria to the West African Ebola epidemic, we have coordinated the full capabilities of the American government behind swift, robust, and innovative responses that saved countless lives.

Harnessing American Ingenuity: We created the U.S. Global Development Lab to mobilize a new generation of entrepreneurs, scientists, and students to solve the world's greatest challenges. The Lab built the Development Innovation Ventures Fund; established a constellation of development innovation labs across America's universities; and launched six Grand Challenges for Development, investing in high-impact innovations from a low-cost infant resuscitation device to new protective suits for Ebola healthcare workers.


Ethiopia: Stunting rate fell 9% in three years, helping 160,000 kids thrive.
Senegal: Child mortality has fallen by more than 40% since 1990.
Haiti: Acute malnutrition fell by 50% and chronic malnutrition by 24% from 2006 to 2012.
Zambia: Maize production grew 32% in 2013 alone, as 89,000 farmers benefited from new technologies.
Colombia: Poverty rate fell nearly 30% from 2009 to 2014, as 1.3 million people moved out of poverty in the last year alone.
Democratic Republic of the Congo: Child morality fell by 30% from 2007 to 2014.
Honduras: Per capita income shot up 237% in one year alone for farming families, as nearly 24,000 people moved out of extreme poverty in 2013.

Bangladesh: Maternal mortality has fallen by more than 66% since 1990, and the rate of primary school enrollment for girls today is 98%.

Nepal: Rate of extreme poverty fell by 53% from 2014 to 2011.

Afghanistan: Child mortality has fallen by more than 50%; maternal mortality by 80%; and access to health services has been expanded by nearly 60% since 2004.

Cambodia: Farmers generated $2.5 million in horticulture sales in 2013, a 147% increase in one year.

A NEW MODEL

Today we are leveraging the power of business and science to end extreme poverty. Countries are making tough reforms, companies are committing substantial investments, and young innovators are designing new solutions. Thanks to the leadership of President Obama and a bipartisan community of support, this new model is delivering meaningful results and bringing our greatest moral aspirations within reach.

Morgana Wingard | USAID

JIM BEVER, MISSION DIRECTOR, GHANA

In the north, Feed the Future has taken a market-based approach to improving yields for dirt-poor farmers, and the progress has been stunning. They're doubling, tripling, quadrupling their yields on the same old hectares of land. Businesses are providing higher quality seeds and fertilizers on credit, and the food industry is receiving better grain. Farmers use the profits for their families. Everyone wins.

The final kicker? Forty percent of the farmers are women. We're not just talking about 30 farmers. We're talking 30,000 farm families—and soon as many as 100,000 families. This is some of the most exciting stuff I've seen since I joined the Agency.

Development is a discipline, but if we're not being bold or taking risks then we're not doing our jobs.

I was Mission Director in Afghanistan at the height of the initial recovery, and one of our assignments was to rebuild the Kabul-Kandahar Highway. This was a deadly serious job, and I was bound and determined to inspect our progress. So they put a Marine convoy together, and I went down the highway.

In Zabul Province, I stopped to pay my respects to the Governor. Although he was sadly assassinated a few months later, we had a great discussion that day about political and development challenges in the region. As we left, one of the local tribal leaders took my arm. "You, Americans," he said, "I want you to remember one thing. You have all the watches, but we, Taliban, have all the time."

It was scary and sobering, and I realized I was at a crossroads. I could have easily retired at that point in my career. But I thought, "If people like me walk away, what does it say about me as a person or as a Foreign Service Officer? What does it say about USAID or about America?"

I decided I would stay. I decided I would commit the rest of my career to development, and I wouldn't let anyone stop me.

Feed the Future is based on the adage: teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime… The goal is to help these nations independently meet the nutrition needs of their people.

—*Senator Mike Johanns*

SAHARAH MOON CHAPOTIN, ACTING DIRECTOR FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND POLICY, BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY

Agriculture was a low priority when I got here eight years ago. Our budget for international agricultural research centers was almost zeroed out. So there was a great sense of excitement around the new agricultural research strategy. Wheat stem rust, climate change—these are not necessarily a priority for any one country, but they are very important to the world as a whole.

I take a lot of pride in our 24 Feed the Future Innovation Labs. They enable researchers to build an impact pathway, to reach out to companies or seed suppliers—not when they have something, but three years before they have something.

Over the past 30 years, the Legume Innovation Lab has developed many new varieties for Latin America that are pest-resistant, stress-tolerant, and very desirable. But they also tested different models of distribution and found that community seed production worked the best. Our Guatemala Mission has now adopted that model and incorporated much newer thinking about nutrition.

When I first started at USAID, travel would not be approved for scientific conferences. It was so disappointing to come in as a science fellow and realize that it just wasn't a priority for the Agency. Now I get to manage a huge science and research portfolio. Getting to see the Agency make that transition has been incredible.

David Rochkind

A NEW MODEL

BETH DUNFORD, MISSION DIRECTOR, NEPAL

I started my career at USAID as a Food for Peace Officer in Ethiopia. The day after I arrived, my boss put me in a car and sent me out to one of the epicenters of the food crisis. A group of women gathered to tell me their stories. One woman was crying from the exhaustion and pain of trying to feed her starving children. There were 14 million people on the brink of starvation that year, and we worked around the clock to stand up a response. Famine takes an emotional as well as a physical toll, especially for those struggling on the edge of life and death.

While I was in Ethiopia, we spent $500 million on food assistance and $5 million on agricultural development. I think we all recognized the imbalance. And to see the whole Agency respond by building Feed the Future—now that was incredible. The Agency was down to fewer than a handful of agriculturalists when we started to build the Bureau for Food Security. We had to make sure we were tapping into the latest science. It wasn't like other sectors where we had the data on hand. So we redid strategies country by country and built a monitoring and evaluation system to collect the data we needed in order to measure our progress.

Now that I'm in Nepal, I have had the privilege of seeing the results of Feed the Future take root. Women farmers have doubled and tripled their income by growing high-value vegetables and taking advantage of the hills to access off-season markets. After seeing the kind of money that their wives can make on the farm, husbands are returning home from their migrant jobs and staying with their families.

We always try to stand back and understand development challenges from the perspective of women. For example, under-five mortality has been decreasing steadily in Nepal, but neonatal mortality has been stagnant. We realized that it had to do with traditional and unsanitary treatments for newborns' umbilical cords, and we looked for a solution that would be culturally acceptable and affordable.

In the past, we probably would have just taken the traditional approach of providing technical assistance to the health ministry. This time, we combined state-of-the-art research with private sector partnerships and government engagement to scale up a life-saving antiseptic called chlorhexidine. A Nepalese pharmaceutical company took a leap of faith and figured out how to produce it cheaply. Now countries around the world are asking for it to be exported.

Across the Agency we're working hard to find the right balance between rigor and expediency. We want to be nimble and get things done quickly; yet, we also want to make sure we have done the analyses on which to base our decisions.

When we strike that balance, our impact is powerful.

My twin sister also works at USAID. Years ago, I'd call her up when she was out on field visits as a health officer. She would tell me how hard it felt going to all these health posts where everyone was dying of AIDS. Then one day she went out, and people weren't dying anymore. They were arriving to pick up their ARVs. She can't retell the story without choking up. In three years, my sister helped Nigeria change the course of its history. This is what I think about sometimes: that we've been given the power to move the course of human progress so dramatically.

A boy and a woman struggle with the dusty wind as they look for water in Wajir, Kenya. With advances in nutrition, agricultural research, and actuarial science, we can strengthen the resilience of remote communities and help millions move out of a state of chronic vulnerability.
Jervis Sundays | Kenya Red Cross Society

Feed the Future needs to be one of the top foreign policy tools in our toolbox.

—Representative Betty McCollum

TJADA MCKENNA, ASSISTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY AND DEPUTY COORDINATOR FOR FEED THE FUTURE

I was working in New York when I heard on NPR that the Gates Foundation was launching AGRA—A Green Revolution in Africa. I thought, "Wow, that is exactly what I want to do." Two weeks later, I was in Seattle for an interview.

I joined the Foundation's small agricultural team led by a young guy named Raj Shah. It felt like a start-up. It had all these super smart people who were very business-oriented and metrics-focused, but who also wanted to save the world. There was a hard-changing sense of can-do, and Raj always challenged us to think bigger.

President Obama's election was a deeply personal and exhilarating moment for me. I leapt at the chance to join his Administration and do precisely this kind of work.

I am especially proud that Feed the Future has pioneered an approach that's being adopted across the Agency. We rebuilt our internal capacity—hiring more than 200 new staff. We created a strong monitoring and evaluation system that now collects data from multiple government agencies. We have proven ourselves capable of leading an interagency initiative. And we formed the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition—a G8 initiative that the White House entrusted us to lead.

At the launch of the New Alliance, President Obama gave the first presidential speech on hunger that anyone can remember.

> USAID has always been on the frontier of private sector engagement, but the New Alliance took it a step further by making sure these partnerships were core business. Instead of just asking for a funding match, we set joint goals around a far bigger, more strategic vision.

I am incredibly hopeful for the future. The team that first built Feed the Future has now gone on to new posts—and taken the lessons with them to shape Power Africa and the U.S. Global Development Lab. A new generation has come into the Bureau. They weren't here at the beginning, but they are now making sure Feed the Future and its results outlast all of us.

In Kenya, Feed the Future is introducing high-value crops such as orange-fleshed sweet potatoes that boost nutrition and incomes. Fintrac Inc.

A NEW MODEL

JEFF HILL, DIVISION CHIEF FOR POLICY, BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY

In the 1980s, agriculture accounted for 10-15% of the Agency's budget. Then it fell dramatically, as our development portfolio withered worldwide. We still did humanitarian assistance. We still saved lives, but we did not actually improve livelihoods.

What you are beginning to see today is evidence that our renewed investment in agriculture works. We have successfully crowded-in new resources and attention and raised the bar for political and technical excellence. The performance of our focus countries is significantly outpacing their neighbors and generating exactly the kinds of results we are looking for. I don't think this story has been fully appreciated yet.

I now anticipate that we will see—and help support—over 100 agricultural policy changes over the next 24 months. We've already seen some incredible progress. In Zambia, the government recently eliminated their long-standing policy on fertilizer subsidies. Fertilizer consumption jumped over 25% in one year. Yields increased 32% nationally. That is huge. That has direct impact on how much extra income people have to pay for school, invest in their business, or look after their health.

There's also a strong new focus on accountability—on transparency in budgets, policies, and partnerships. And that's opening up space for civil society and the private sector to have a voice in the development of their own countries.

I remember a meeting I attended in Uganda back in 2009 with a group of agricultural leaders from across Africa. They were the heads of research and policy organizations, and I had been working closely with them to build support for Feed the Future. It was the day that President Obama rallied the world at L'Aquila behind a new commitment to invest in agriculture. I'll always remember receiving a note about his announcement. I felt so proud. We were going to be serious about this for the first time in a long time.

That was a good day.

The progress USAID has achieved through its Feed the Future program is making a positive difference for millions around the world.

—Jim Borel, Executive Vice President, DuPont

Feed the Future has helped 7 million farm families apply new technologies and practices, including highly-skilled grafting techniques to increase yields and incomes. Riccardo Gangale | USAID

Ali Khurshid

RICHARD MATENDO, MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROGRAM MANAGER SPECIALIST, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

For 12 years, I practiced medicine and managed research and public health programs. Having that experience—understanding the perspectives of a clinician, a patient, a community, a researcher—is invaluable. It helps me think differently.

After we launched a Call to Action, the Minister of Health committed to putting the country on track to end preventable child death.

For the first time, we have a national plan that aligns all our partners against clear objectives.

As part of that plan, we are applying very simple preventative interventions to save many lives. We've helped distribute huge quantities of bed nets, introduced Helping Babies Breathe to address asphyxia, and scaled up Kangaroo Mother Care to save preterm babies. It's having a big impact.

[USAID] underwent an exhaustive review process that resulted in the realignment of $2.9 billion of its resources to prevent 500,000 child deaths by the end of 2015. What this shows us is that our institutions can aspire to cull not only the low-hanging fruits of public health but to climb towards the higher branches, where the fruits of global health equity have yet to be harvested.

—Paul Farmer

KELLY SALDANA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HEALTH, INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AND NUTRITION, BUREAU FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

When the idea for Acting on the Call: Ending Preventable Maternal and Child Death first surfaced, it was just another event. Just another Raj idea. Then it grew into a very big event with a book, and the book grew into a very big book. It not only included an comprehensive review of our grants and contracts, but very specific commitments from our Missions in twenty-four countries to help save the lives of up to fifteen million children by 2020 and directly save the lives of up to half-a-million children by the end of 2015.

It became clear that this wasn't going to be just another event.

The commitments in the book come from an exhaustive process that began in five countries, where teams from Washington worked with Mission staff to assess the results we were achieving for our resources.

I led the team that went to Mozambique. It was a great team, and we had very productive conversations with the Mission. We found that small tweaks to existing programs could potentially have a big impact on results. One my favorite examples came out of our family planning program. One of the Mission's commitments is to support community health outreach through mobile brigades. Another is to increase the use of long-acting and permanent methods of contraception. So they had mobile brigades, but those brigades didn't always include people with the skills, qualifications, or supplies to administer long-acting contraceptive methods.

We learned that in order to increase our commitment to results, we don't have to transform entire programs. We just need to focus on the trees within the forest. As a result of these five "beta tests," we were able to work through similar recommendations within our twenty-four priority countries to sharpen their implementation against very specific interventions that we know work.

The June 2012 Call to Action put everyone on the same page around the world in terms of a vision to end preventable child and maternal deaths. The June 2014 Acting on the Call was our nation's commitment to this shared vision of maternal and child survival. I have no doubt that through this process we have become more accountable and effective.

A NEW MODEL

USAID is transforming how money is spent and is leading a new way of tracking lives saved and measuring economic impact. As a businessman who understands return on investment, I am confident that this focus on impact… will transform how business is done.

—Ray Chambers

PETER WAITHAKA, HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH SPECIALIST, KENYA

I taught public health at a university for nearly 10 years until it became too much of a routine. Here at USAID, the challenges change by the day. Since Kenya's devolution, counties in rural areas have more resources, and people have more access, but there are many new challenges.

We have helped increase the country's budget for health workers and shape the National Health Sector Strategic Plan. We've also supported a revolving loan fund for students—and our contributions have been matched by the government and private sector. Scholarships only help a handful of students before the money is gone. Now, this fund will last even after we leave. Talk about country ownership! You contribute less but leverage more from the private sector and the government, and you have a system running.

When you look at the news and see that the number of health workers has increased and that maternal and child mortality has decreased, I know that there is a connection to what we're doing—and what I am doing.

KAREN CLUNE, INNOVATION ADVISOR, CENTER FOR ACCELERATING INNOVATION AND IMPACT, BUREAU FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

I started a week before Saving Lives at Birth launched, and we didn't know what to expect. Four rounds later, we have a pipeline of 81 innovations and a global community of inspiring problem-solvers. I don't think I fully grasped at the time just how new and innovative the Grand Challenge was for USAID.

Saving Lives at Birth is governed by a principle of openness—accepting ideas from anywhere and treating them equally during a rigorous review process. The Odon device is probably the "best well known." Here's an Argentinian car mechanic who—with no medical training—designs a device to safely deliver a baby after he watches a YouTube video about removing a cork from a wine bottle. You can't help but cheer for him.

The WHO is now leading clinical trials for the Odon device and Becton Dickinson has licensed the technology. Inspired by Saving Lives at Birth, Becton Dickinson is now thinking about building out a suite of devices for maternal and child health.

In the midst of all of this, I had twins. At the end of my pregnancy, I was going to the doctor twice a week. I knew everything about them—their positions, their heartbeats. If I lived in a developing country, at what stage would I have known they were twins? Would both of them have lived?

When I was in the Peace Corps in Senegal, I sat next to a young woman on a bus who had visited a local health clinic because of stomach pains. For whatever reason, the nurse sent her away. Ten minutes into the bus ride, she began bleeding. We got off at the same stop, and she had to walk two miles home—after just having had a miscarriage. All I had was a water bottle to give her.

I think about her all the time.

WENDY TAYLOR, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ACCELERATING INNOVATION AND IMPACT, BUREAU FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

The idea for the Center for Accelerating Innovation and Impact was simple. While we have so many life-saving tools at our disposal, so few are reaching those who need them most. There is a real problem in being able to take these innovations the last long mile.

That's not the case in industry. You get innovations out the door as soon as they're approved because you need a return on investment very quickly. So we set up the Center to apply that business and marketplace thinking—that rigor and discipline—in global health.

That is what's so exciting about chlorhexidine—the simple tube of gel that can save an infant's life. It's such a great story for USAID because we supported the early stage research that showed how cost-effective and impactful it is. Then, through Saving Lives at Birth, we helped scale it up across Nepal by working with community health workers and local pharmaceutical companies.

With intense focus and partnerships, we have been able to closely match industry standards on scaling. It creates an important benchmark for us. Now, we're looking not only at how we can apply this model in other countries but how we can replicate it with other life-saving products.

Photo series: Thomas Cristofoletti | USAID

A NEW MODEL

ANDREW HERSCOWITZ, COORDINATOR FOR POWER AFRICA AND TRADE AFRICA

When I was 16, I was an exchange student in the Dominican Republic. It was the first time I ever experienced sustained power outages. Despite the fact that I lived with the Minister of Public Works and his family, these outages would last for hours every single day. They affected everyone—rich or poor. Factories would stop production. Clinics closed. Food spoiled.

Experiencing energy poverty in a country so close to the United States made an impact on me. When I was asked to coordinate Power Africa, I jumped on the opportunity to help turn on lights for millions of people.

We've heard President Obama speak passionately about Power Africa and how it offers the promise of brighter futures for Africa's youth. The President's commitment has inspired us to up our game and meet the new challenge he set by tripling our goals.

When the Ebola crisis hit in Liberia, it pained me to think about people dying in the dark alone. Liberia has only 23 megawatts of power—about as much as the Dallas Cowboys stadium uses during a game. We had to do something.

Working closely with Disaster Assistance Response Team on the ground, the Power Africa team bought generators locally for the new Ebola treatment units.

Within two weeks, the lights were on in the clinics. Staff were able to treat patients in the dark of night when ambulances arrived. And patients were able to charge their mobile phones and speak with their families, giving them a lifeline of support.

The opportunity to make a difference in the fight against Ebola was not just a highlight of my time with Power Africa but of my entire career.

Thanks to Power Africa generators, the fight to save lives from Ebola continues through the night in Liberia. Morgana Wingard | USAID


solo

A NEW MODEL

In partnership with African nations, we're going to develop new sources of energy. We'll reach more households not just in cities, but in villages and on farms… A light where currently there is darkness; the energy needed to lift people out of poverty—that's what opportunity looks like.

—President Barack Obama

Matthieu Young | Off-Grid: Electric

STEVE WASIRA JR., POWER AFRICA TRANSACTION ADVISER, TANZANIA

Call it luck or coincidence, but I happened to be in my home country of Tanzania when President Obama visited in July 2013.

I told my cab driver to get home quick. I didn't want to miss the President's speech.

On the live broadcast, I heard President Obama talk about the need for a new energy partnership between the United States and Africa. Today, I am fortunate to be able to contribute to that very initiative: Power Africa. I work with the Tanzanian government on issues ranging from reforming policy to developing technical capability to helping address project financing needs.

There is a certain buzz associated with Power Africa in Tanzania. People are heavily interested in this initiative, perhaps most of all my mother, who lives in Dar es Salaam and likes to tell her friends how proud she is of her son coming home to support development efforts in his country.

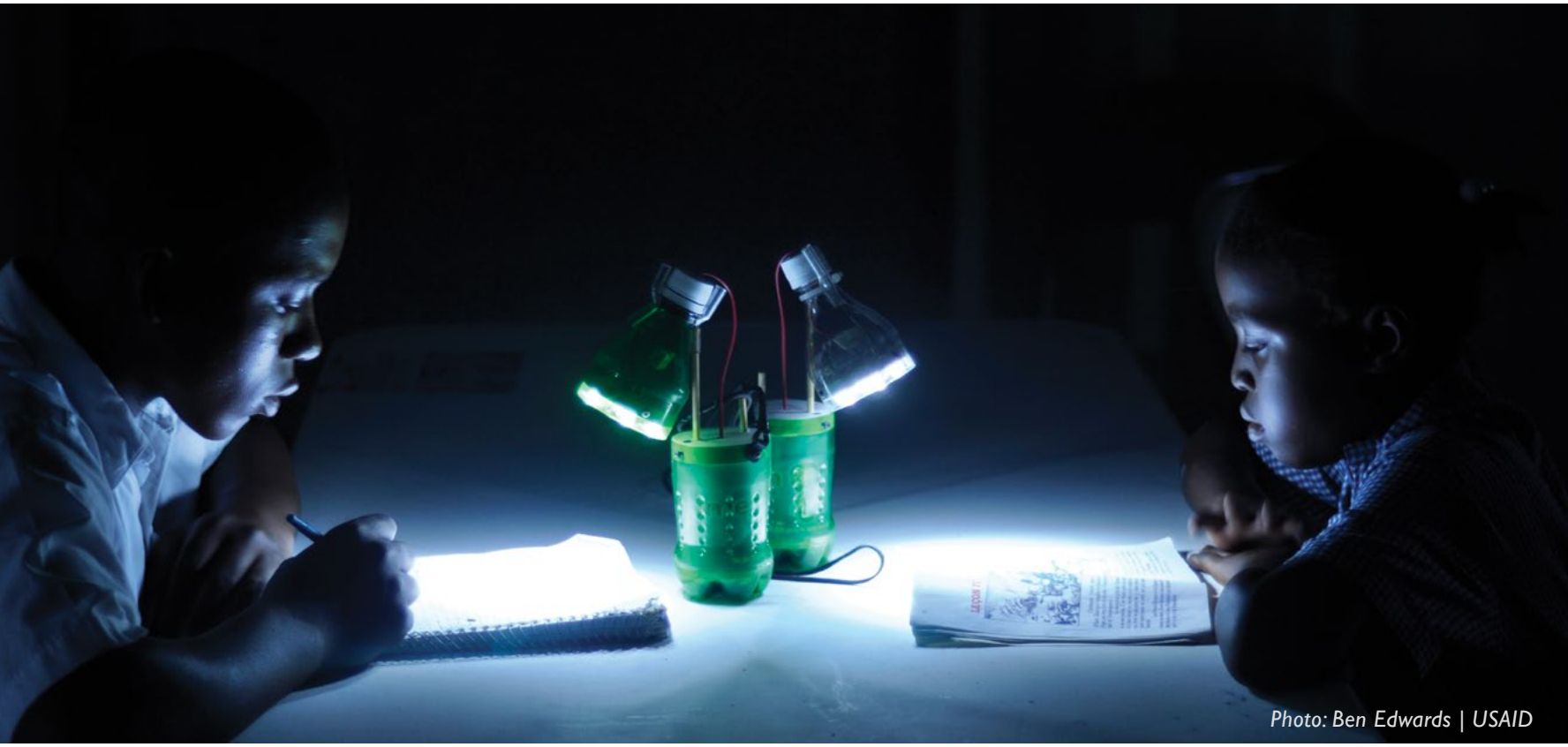


Photo: Ben Edwards | USAID

MARK CARRATO, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, KENYA

In energy, the need for investment far eclipses anything we could spend ourselves, so we have to be truly catalytic. That's why the transactions approach of Power Africa is so interesting—it shows we can be leaders in an unconventional space.

In Kenya, we are looking at the energy sector very holistically. We work on the transactions themselves, as well as helping the Kenyans incorporate them into the grid. We've also provided substantial feedback on national energy laws. Increasingly, we're investing in off-grid technology and creative financing models to ensure the new megawatts of power spur growth for those who need them most.

We've learned a lot from the New Alliance, especially the idea of marrying policy reform, technical assistance, and private sector commitments. I'll always remember joining a meeting with Prime Minister Meles in Ethiopia and discussing the New Alliance Cooperation Framework word-for-word. We were shaping something that could affect millions of people. If all went well, that conversation could become the seed of who knows how many policy changes.

It is clear that our development investments need a robust, healthy policy environment. The real results will happen when this new model becomes a part of how companies invest overtime.

For me, that's the beauty of USAID—the opportunity to work at the intersection of policy and implementation, diplomacy and development.

For those of us who live with this reality [of extreme poverty] in our countries, it is heartwarming, indeed, to see that there are friends out here who care about the plight of the poorest—and are ready to do what it takes to erase this scourge from the face of this planet.

—President Jakaya Kikwete, Tanzania

AMY BEELER, PRIVATE SECTOR AND ENERGY TEAM LEADER, ETHIOPIA

There is a little flag ceremony at graduation for new Foreign Service Officers where they call up your name and hand you the flag of your assigned country. It's all very dramatic and suspenseful. At my ceremony, they handed me a flag I didn't recognize. In my official photo, I think my mouth is literally open with surprise. Of course, I had no idea what the flag of Georgia looked like.

Today, I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to serve there. During my tour, Georgia had the first-ever free and fair transition of power in the entire former Soviet Union. We didn't think it was going to happen. As we drove back to Tbilisi from our election sites, we expected the capital to be on fire. We expected the ruling party to reject the results and go to war. But the city was peaceful. We knew that the work we had done had made that moment possible. The story does not get told very often, but it was—and will always be—one of the highlights of my career.

In Ethiopia, I'm looking at very different kinds of issues, including trade and energy. We are working on Ethiopia's first-ever power purchase agreement on a massive 1,000-megawatt geothermal project—Africa's largest—with an Icelandic-American company. The deal simply would not be moving forward without Power Africa and our transactions advisors.

The job is very stressful. Even now, I have hives on my face. You feel like the entire world is watching. In a country like Ethiopia—with such great needs—it is easy to think that you haven't made a difference.

But then you look at our impact. The rate of stunting and wasting has come down dramatically. Income from agriculture has shot up. Communities know how to cope with drought. And now we are unlocking a vast engine of clean energy. You can really see a direct correlation between our partnership and the country's progress. We try to remind ourselves of that.

Adriane Ohanesian | AFP

A NEW MODEL

URIM AHMETI, TEAM LEADER FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE OFFICE, KOSOVO

We at USAID can be very proud because at the time of Kosovo's declaration of independence, we stepped in and supported the task of creating and building a new nation. We helped the Assembly draft and adopt the first Constitution of Kosovo as an independent state, followed by a plethora of new legislation. We helped establish new institutions, including a Constitutional Court that is the foundation of the country and the custodian of its constitutional order.

At the same time, we've worked closely with civil society to promote a demand for accountability. One needs to look back only ten, fifteen years to remember what Kosovo was like: a devastated country, no infrastructure, no state institutions, and very little hope. This period—the birth of my country—is very memorable to me and an entire generation. It is a point in history that will never be forgotten.

USAID had a key role throughout this process and helped build this new country in accordance with principles of democracy. It is very rewarding work. It doesn't come without challenges, but we need to persevere.

VICTORIA AYER, SENIOR ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOVERNANCE ADVISOR, CENTER OF EXCELLENCE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

Democracy is not just about setting up an election. It is about helping someone become a citizen of democracy and all that it means.

I think the private sector's role in democracy has been vastly underplayed. I get the privilege of looking at this relationship through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. It is fascinating to see the power of bringing civil society, the private sector, and the government together.

We saw it in Colombia. Just having a formal structure in place changes the way everyone interacts with each other. It gives people voice and agency. Colombia is now up for EITI membership, which no one thought possible even two years ago. The government has agreed to disclose their revenues, and the private sector has agreed to publish them. Licenses and contracts are going to be online. It is huge.

No one thought EITI would be this successful. We don't fully understand its impact yet, but we have seen a correlation between the length of time you are in EITI and a decline in corruption.

I love the fact that we have a community organizer as our President, and I love that his mom worked for USAID. This work is about changing your community. If you have not experienced that—if you haven't voted or worked in a soup kitchen or volunteered on a campaign—then advising others on how to do it well in their country is hubris.

DAVID YANG, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, CENTER OF EXCELLENCE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

We have been in a stall—in a time of backsliding—for democracy and human rights around the world. How USAID as a development agency responds to this challenge is a very important test of our global leadership.

That's why we're focusing so intensely on securing our core budgets for our time-tested programs as well as innovatively integrating principles of democracy and human rights across our work. How can we promote social, economic, and political rights through climate change adaptation, food security, or poverty reduction? I think this emphasis on integration has helped teams across development really open up to the idea of a "rights-based approach."

I'm especially excited about supporting President Obama's call to stand with civil society in the face of this democratic recession. Thanks to his leadership, we're establishing regional centers of civil society innovation across the developing world to empower human rights defenders in closing spaces and connect them to colleagues in more open societies.

I have had so many memorable moments. In the winter of 2012, just a few months after President Obama's historic trip to Burma, I was asked to lead a rule-of-law assessment in the newly opened country. One afternoon, I met a judge who had struggled to assert his independence during decades of authoritarian rule. It was so inspiring to find—there in the hinterland of Burma—the emergence of a new democratic ethos.

LAURA PAVLOVIC, DIVISION CHIEF FOR THE CROSS-SECTORIAL PROGRAMS, CENTER OF EXCELLENCE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

I'm a lawyer by background, but my interest in human rights goes all the way back to the 1980s when I was an exchange student in Bosnia. The first asylum case I worked on was for my host sisters.

After working as a lawyer in the private sector for many years, I had gotten used to working really hard. But here at USAID, I've found that folks keep the same hours out of sheer passion for the work that they do. I feel committed in much the same way, because there are so many things that I want us to get right as an Agency.

The front page of the newspaper every day—all the chaos—that is our world. For anyone engaged in this work right now, it is really hard to turn it off and go home at the end of the day.

With the Ebola outbreak, I think people started to understand how central issues of democracy, governance, and human rights really are to development. The role of informal leaders and political culture played a huge role in determining the spread of the disease, and basic things like trust in government become paramount.

Here in Washington, I'm leading a brand new division in the Center that looks at how you integrate principles of democracy, governance, and human rights across our work from climate change to Power Africa. In order for us to be successful, we have to make the case that paying attention to democracy, governance, and human rights really can improve development outcomes.

I've been thrilled to see us making investments in building out this evidence base. In Zambia, we're doing a randomized control trial to understand how governance work might best contribute to improving development outcomes. We're looking at interventions in both the supply side (strengthening the Ministry of Health's audit capacity) and the demand side (improving service delivery).

The one image that I always come back to was from the 2009 election in Moldova—the election that sparked what later became known as the "Twitter Revolution."

> I followed the mobile voting team that day and witnessed two grandmothers casting their ballots using Soviet passports. I still have a photo of that moment hanging up on my wall.

It took months and massive protests, but the elections were finally rerun. It was an incredible thing to have played a small part in—a country finally abiding by the hopes of its population.

PETER WIEBLER, DIRECTOR OF THE DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE OFFICE, SERBIA

No two days are alike. The work we're doing here is strengthening democratic institutions in a country that has been through a tremendous amount of conflict, economic upheaval, and political transition. It is an immense task—trying to bring this country out of the dark hole that Milosevic led it into.

We are not at the exciting, visibly compelling stage of political revolution in Serbia. We are in the boring, grinding phase of incremental reform. It's not as easy to get excited about this stage of development, but in many ways, it's more important. This is when new democratic leaders and institutions are forged.

The U.S.—and USAID especially—have a unique role to play. We're often looked to as leaders, pioneers, and innovators. Our assistance, believe it or not, tends to blaze trails for other donors.

We were the first—and still are the only—major donor to work with the country's high court council, an essential part of an independent judiciary. We've helped build a managerial and finance unit from scratch that will manage the judiciary's budget and allocate resources to all of Serbia's courts.

We've also done a tremendous amount of work with a rather diverse civil society. Serbia has, for example, the highest number of refugees of any country in Europe: all Serbs from other countries. Together with the Ana & Vlade Divac Foundation, we've provided over 10,000 young people in the country's poorest towns with very small grants to improve their communities and develop new skills. The Divac Foundation has not only matched our contribution but has also leveraged private resources on a greater than 1:1 basis.

I smile when we hear the Administrator talk about the new USAID or the "new model of development." We aren't working on the scale of Power Africa or some of other marquee initiatives, but we're applying the same ideas toward the very same goals.

In performing your mission relentlessly, compassionately, and selflessly, you have saved and improved the lives of millions of people around the globe. My father would have been so proud of you and USAID.

—*Caroline Kennedy*

There are endless hopes and dreams we have for the future, and USAID is a tremendous part of that.

—Senator Johnny Isakson

LAURA BERGER, DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM LEADER, SOUTHERN AFRICA

I've always been inspired by the stories of incredible people who dedicate themselves to making other people's lives better. Working with USAID, I have had the opportunity meet a lot of these everyday heroes who are working to improve their communities through civil society initiatives.

I've also seen a lot of different stages of civil society development and had the chance to really study the sector. In Afghanistan, it is in its infancy. Outside the main cities, there isn't a widespread understanding of what civil society's role is in the community. In Honduras, informal grassroots organizations are becoming more sophisticated but struggling to balance donor priorities and their own communities' priorities. Here in South Africa, there is a very rich history of civil society, and the vast majority of our programming supports local initiatives. But civil society is undergoing a transformation from a post-Apartheid, resource-rich environment to an upper middle-income country where foreign donor funds are becoming scarce and civil society must learn to adapt to the new reality.

Regardless of the stage, I can say the people I have met have been universally amazing. In Honduras and Afghanistan, people risk their lives on a daily basis to stand up for the rights of others—women's rights or the right to education or just a healthy, safe childhood.

In Honduras, through the Central American Regional Security Initiative, we supported youth outreach centers, some of which were managed by former gang members who still have scars from violence suffered while in the gang or in their effort to escape that life. Many are threatened for the work they're doing, yet they continue to do it because they want to give the next generation an alternative to the violence in the community.

Visiting the outreach centers, you could see what it meant to do this exceptionally tough work in these marginalized, forgotten communities. When we visited the centers, we would be told by outreach center staff to wear our USAID caps and roll down the windows. We had to let the gangs see and recognize us. It was just a small taste of the vulnerability that the outreach center workers feel every day.

But if visitors have the nerve to make it that far then they get to meet talented kids who just want to play video games, kick around a soccer ball, or take music lessons. Many of the kids, as they get older, came back as volunteers to teach life skills or English classes. And it's these kids and the people like them—that come back to do more—that keep me coming to work.

An Afghan woman attends a ceremony hosted by USAID to mark International Women's Day in Helmand province. In 2014, we launched our largest effort in our Agency's history that is focused on empowering women. The partnership will help 75,000 Afghan women achieve leadership roles across society. Behrouz Mehri | AFP

CHRISTIE VILSACK, SENIOR ADVISOR FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, EDUCATION, AND ENVIRONMENT

Every day raises important new themes for global education.

I recently visited Indiana University, where 14 young women from South Sudan are getting their Master's degrees in education. That's an especially important theme in education today: keeping girls safe. We cannot educate the girls of South Sudan—or Nigeria, or Haiti, or Pakistan—if they don't have women teachers; and they won't ever have women teachers so long as girls aren't in school. These 14 young women from South Sudan represent the future.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I have also seen how our government's support for accelerated schools is giving older students a second chance. Research tells us that the brain continues to develop in adolescence, so it's especially important never to give up on a student's education. As a teacher who has taught teenagers my entire life, I was deeply touched to see 16-year-old girls learning alongside second-graders.

But girls' education is not just a matter for women. Fathers have to care what happens to their daughters, and male teachers have to champion their female students. The truth is that basic education is the foundation, but secondary and higher education are the ladder.

NITIN MADHAV, OFFICER FOR CHINA, TIBET, THAILAND, LAOS, AND ASIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, ASIA BUREAU

When September 11th happened, I was one of the few people in USAID who had actually been to Afghanistan. When the transitional government asked for help publishing textbooks so that schools could open in the spring, I was asked to get the ball rolling.

Our job was to write, print, and deliver 10.5 million textbooks to drop zones across Afghanistan for hundreds of schools. Everywhere we looked, there were new and different problems. We had to completely rewrite the curricula, because the old textbooks were written during the Cold War. One of the alphabet charts had "B for Bomb" and "T for Tank." There were no printing presses for the Dari language, so those had to be calligraphed by hand. We photocopied them in Peshawar and Lahore, hired dozens of people to bind them by hand, and leased old Russian planes to make the drops.

Today, millions of children are in school in Afghanistan—and somewhere a third grader is opening a textbook that I helped put into her hand.

Suraj Ratna Shakya | USAID (Top Left); Patrick Baz | AFP (Top Right); Christophe Archambault | AFP (Bottom Left)

A NEW MODEL

HALA ELSERAFY, EDUCATION SPECIALIST, EGYPT

In Egypt, entrance to university is based on a national test that measures the memorization of facts. It's a high-stakes test.

When President Obama visited Egypt in 2009, he announced a new effort to promote science and technology in the Middle East. I have always been fascinated with the use of the scientific method in American public schools and believe this is very important for Egypt's future.

Since the President's visit, we've worked with the Ministry of Education to establish two high schools in science and mathematics for more than 500 of Egypt's brightest students. For the first time ever, these students are not just listening to lectures and memorizing facts; they're doing research and working together in teams. This is very rare in Egypt.

Recently, two teams from Maadi Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics High School for Girls won the national science fair competition. Both teams looked at creative ways to make water safe to drink. They traveled to the worldwide Intel science competition in the United States.

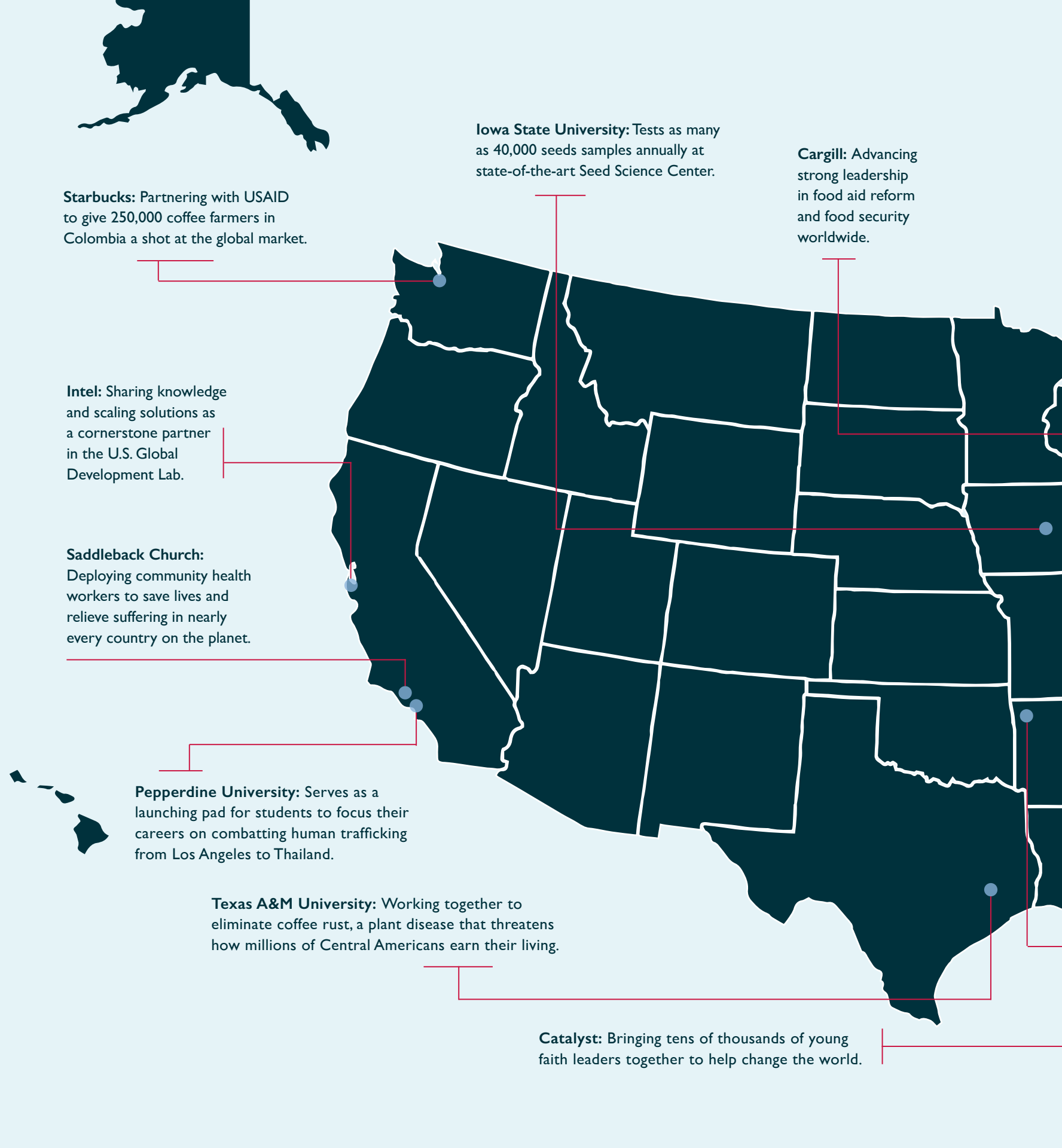
We're getting ready to open three more schools next year. We're also establishing science and research clubs in middle schools to expand the pool of talented students. The Ministry wants to scale up these clubs nationwide to reach at least one million children.

I speak with the students all the time. Some of the graduates are even thinking about establishing an alumni network. Just seeing them and hearing about their experiences makes all the hard work worthwhile.

USAID is a reflection of the best of America.

—Representative Nita Lowey

In the West Bank, girls are thriving in the classroom. Since 2000, USAID has constructed nearly 3,000 classrooms and renovated 2,700 more--allowing many schools to cut class size and eliminate the need for students to learn in shifts. Bobby Neptune | USAID


Starbucks: Partnering with USAID to give 250,000 coffee farmers in Colombia a shot at the global market.
Iowa State University: Tests as many as 40,000 seeds samples annually at state-of-the-art Seed Science Center.
Cargill: Advancing strong leadership in food aid reform and food security worldwide.
Intel: Sharing knowledge and scaling solutions as a cornerstone partner in the U.S. Global Development Lab.
Saddleback Church: Deploying community health workers to save lives and relieve suffering in nearly every country on the planet.
Pepperdine University: Serves as a launching pad for students to focus their careers on combatting human trafficking from Los Angeles to Thailand.
Texas A&M University: Working together to eliminate coffee rust, a plant disease that threatens how millions of Central Americans earn their living.
Catalyst: Bringing tens of thousands of young faith leaders together to help change the world.

Michigan State University: Creating, testing, and scaling solutions to improve food security through a new regional innovation hub in Malawi.

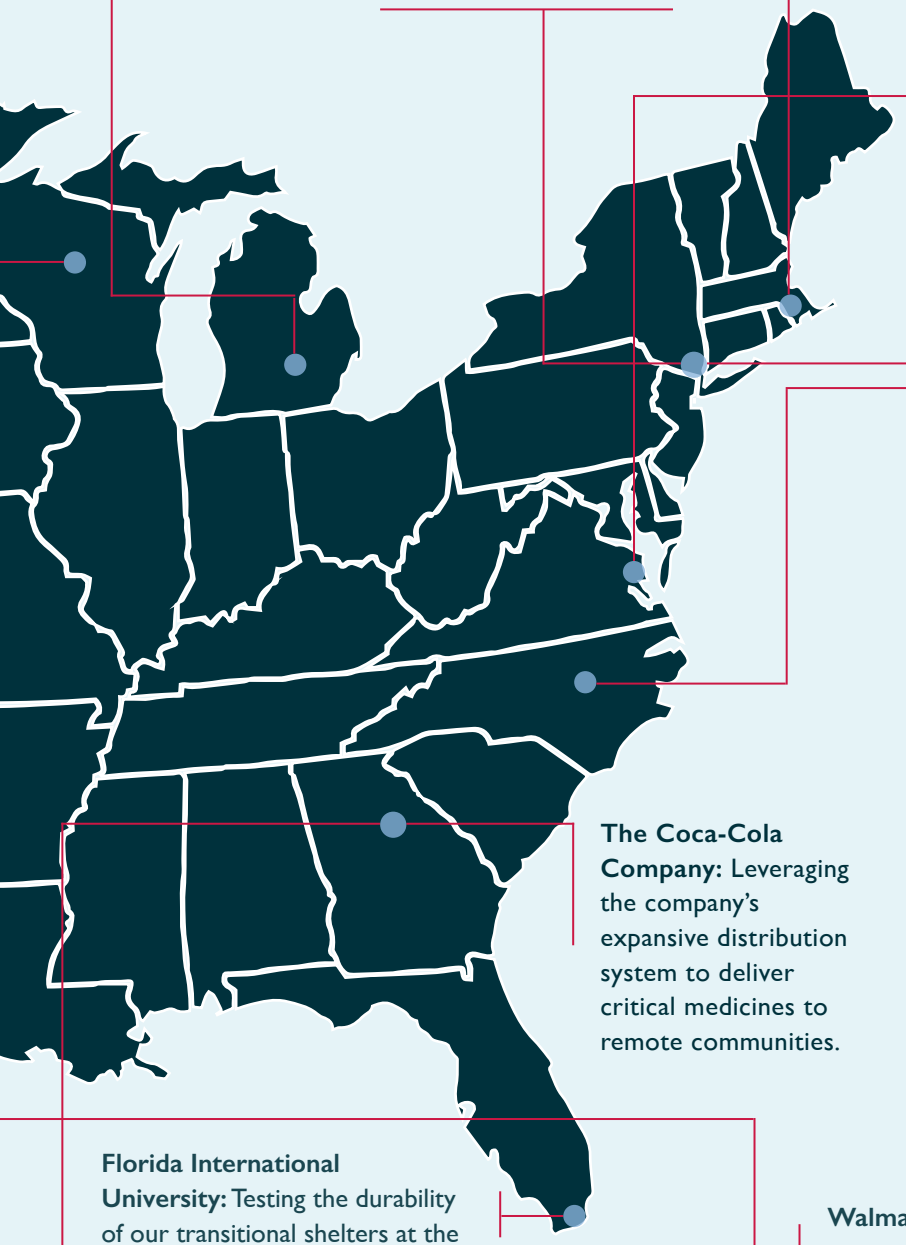
Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Partnering with University of California, Berkeley and a local business school in India to train entrepreneurs on launching development-focused start-ups.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee: Bringing together leading Jewish humanitarian organizations to help end extreme poverty.

The United States Military Academy at West Point: Hosted its first-ever keynote address by a USAID Administrator at the Student Conference on U.S. Affairs in 2011.

The College of William & Mary: Partnering with Brigham Young University to improve monitoring and evaluation with geo-coding technology in Afghanistan.

Duke University: Stopping the spread of HIV from mothers to newborns with the Pratt Pouch, an innovation that provides a pre-measured dose of antiretroviral medication for infants.



NEW CHAMPIONS

Many Americans believe that foreign aid represents 25% of the national budget and ought to be cut. When they learn that it makes up less than 1%, they are astonished. And when you describe what we do with less than 1% many Americans believe we're not spending enough. From inner-city churches in Detroit and Oakland to the nationwide response after the Haiti earthquake, Americans from all walks of life have a depth of passion and support for global development.

The Coca-Cola Company: Leveraging the company's expansive distribution system to deliver critical medicines to remote communities.

Florida International University: Testing the durability of our transitional shelters at the Wall of Wind, a 15-foot machine that simulates the power of a Category 5 hurricane.

Walmart: Joining forces with USAID to connect rural smallholder farmers in Central America to global supply chains.

I challenge any other part of the American government to prove a better return on investment than USAID.

—Senator Lindsey Graham

CHUCK COOPER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

We've made significant progress over the last several years in changing the way we do business, and that includes how we're communicating to our audiences.

Because we're such a mission-driven Agency, developing and communicating a new mission statement has been very important to the reform effort: "We partner to end extreme poverty and to promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity."

> The mission statement works because it's descriptive of who we are as an Agency, aspirational of who we want to be, and provides a very clear target against which we can measure progress.

Using the mission statement as the foundation, we've been able to communicate our message more effectively—not only to new partners and the American people but to members of Congress.

Over the last five years, the Administrator has spent an enormous amount of time and energy meeting with Members, developing relationships, and raising awareness about the great work the Agency is doing. He's talked a lot about the "new model" and the importance of science, technology, innovation and partnership. He's also emphasized how we're applying a results-based approach. Knowing what works and what doesn't—and having the evidence base to understand the difference—allows us to keep getting better.

As a result, we're well positioned on the Hill, despite the budget-constrained environment. Over the last several appropriations cycles, our core accounts have been funded at a level higher than the President's budget request, which doesn't happen often. There are reasons for that, including the U.S. Government's need to respond to multiple crises around the world. But the fact that core USAID-managed accounts have been funded at levels higher than the President's request really does reflect how our work is viewed on the Hill.

Bipartisanship is an essential ingredient to this approach.

The fact that Administrator Shah was asked to give the keynote address at the National Prayer Breakfast was a remarkable bipartisan vote of confidence in USAID. The Prayer Breakfast was an amazing platform to communicate about our mission and our work to end extreme poverty.

We've gotten great feedback about the speech. It was one of those moments where you take a step back and think, "Wow, this is a very big stage., and we're being very well represented."

So it's an exciting time for our Agency. We have a lot of energy and a lot of momentum. Now we have to sustain it.

In 2013, President Obama traveled to Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania, where he consistently held up USAID's new model as emblematic of our nation's commitment to a new partnership with Africa. Jim Watson | AFP

CHRISTA CAPOZZOLA, DIRECTOR OF BUDGET AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Our budget is doing well. The trend in the last five years, in particular, has been extremely positive. At the same time, we're dealing with an increasingly constrained fiscal environment. We're dealing with budget caps; we've dealt with sequestration; and we're facing more protracted crises around the world. The key question for us is how we can organize and justify a budget request against this challenging backdrop.

We've been doing very well largely because we've been able to establish strategic priorities in a much more sophisticated way than ever before—in a manner that is driven by data and specific goals. To be successful in this budget climate, you have to be able to demonstrate what the return on investment is going to be for the American people. You can only do that when you have a strategy and clear goals for every sector and every country. Thanks to this approach, we've been able to secure strong bipartisan support for our budget in Congress.

There are always going to be constraints and competing priorities. That's why focus and selectivity is the critical foundation of any budget. Making trade-offs in a thoughtful and analytical way is how we tell the most compelling story about why we need these resources. And we've done that. We've been able to say that we've reduced program areas by 35% Agency-wide and focused USAID's development resources more intensively in those countries that have both the need and potential for transformational progress. We're zeroing in on the activities that matter—on the investments that will lead to concrete results.

These steps—these essential strategies and trade-offs—have helped the Agency present a more creditable and compelling budget proposal to the President and Congress.

NEW CHAMPIONS

ALEX THIER, ASSISTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU OF POLICY, PLANNING, AND LEARNING

Over the last five years, I've served as the Assistant to the Administrator for Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as the head of Policy, Planning, and Learning. They're similar roles in the sense of the policy and implementation journey that our Agency has taken. When I started at USAID, the Afghanistan and Pakistan account was almost one-third of the entire Agency's budget. One of the most important things we were able to do was shift that portfolio in fundamental ways that came to reflect USAID Forward and the "new model for development."

Some of the principles we tried to apply in our two largest and most challenging programs were very instructive in terms of what we have tried to do with the Agency as a whole. We emphasized country ownership and expanded our pool of partners, including forging an innovative public-private financing partnership for small and medium enterprises in Pakistan, of all places. We focused on science, technology, and innovation and established USAID Afghanistan as an early leader in mobile money. Most important, we pushed for a strong emphasis on results—actually setting hard targets for ourselves.

Applying these new principles in challenging environments is really what PPL is all about. Because at the end of the day, all our people are out there in 80 countries around the world doing their best to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies. If our policy work is not in service of that mission, then it's not useful.

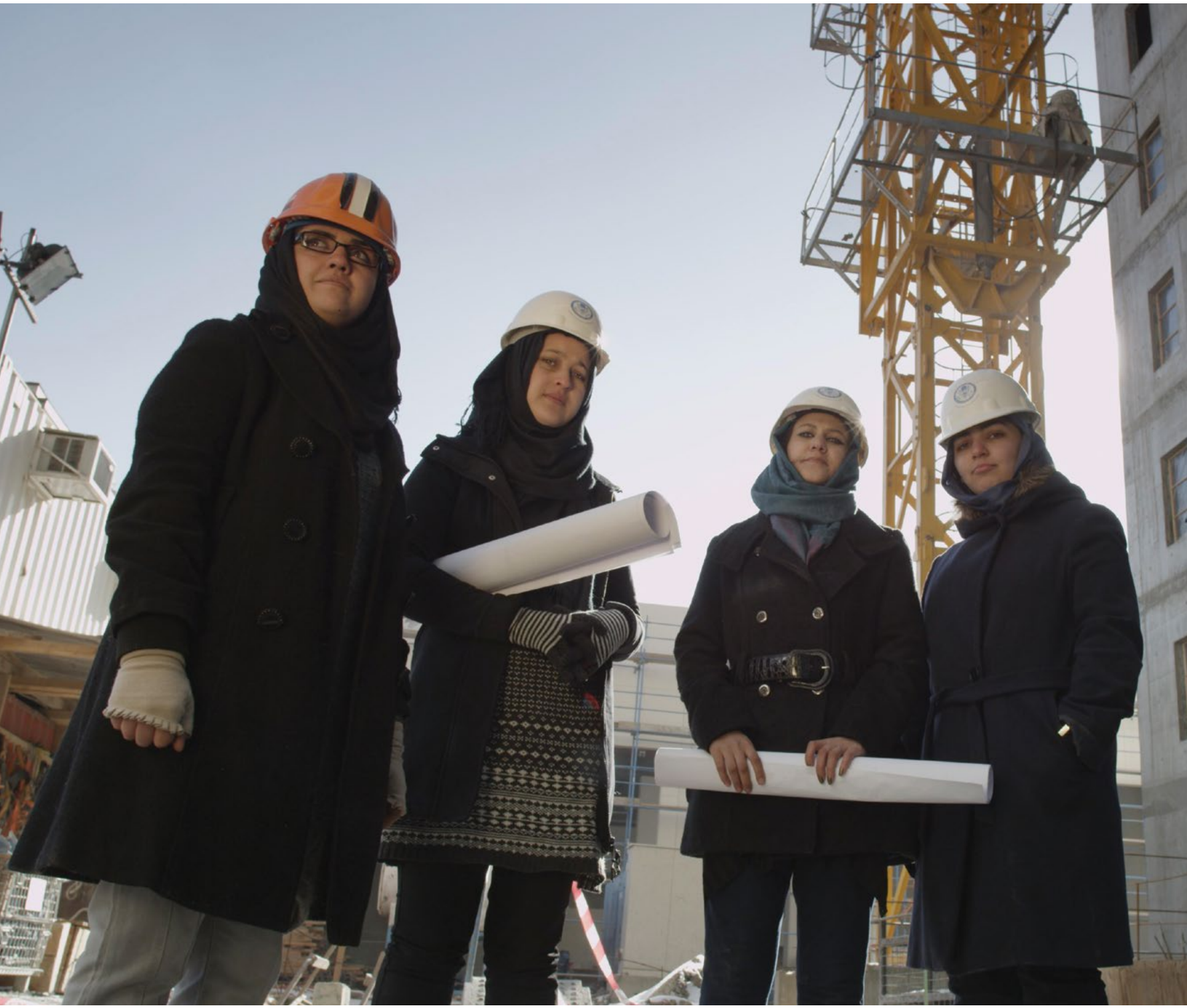
I didn't realize until I came to PPL how profoundly the view of USAID had changed.

Before I joined USAID, I was one of the many people who were deeply concerned about the Agency, its reputation, and its ability to serve as the global leader in development. In five years, however, we have seen a dramatic transformation through bold partnerships like Feed the Future and the New Alliance, Power Africa, and the Call to Action.

You have to remember that the old model of aid was rooted in a rapidly disappearing reality. The world had fundamentally changed, and official development assistance no longer drove the global agenda exclusively. Today, our assistance is now matched by U.S. private philanthropy alone. It is way outmatched by remittances and foreign direct investment. And all of that is now already and about to be even more dramatically outmatched by domestic resource mobilization—the money that countries raise to finance their own development path.

Our assistance has to enable this larger pot of resources and much larger panoply of development actors. Look at universities. When you talk about energy, people refer to something called "stranded power" or "islands of power"—where you start to produce more power than you have the capacity to distribute. Right now, the work in U.S. universities on development is stranded power. There are brilliant people doing incredible work in a supercharger atmosphere. In Silicon Valley, people are talking about "radical affordability." In places like Nepal, we did a random control trial that demonstrated you could reduce neonatal mortality by 34% by the application of a 14-cent tube of disinfectant that you put on a newborn baby's umbilical cord.

The next big step is creating scientific and technological capacity within developing countries themselves. It's not just about seeding innovation but also about fostering an enabling environment that reinvests the fruits of innovation back into development. The ultimate goal here is to put ourselves out of business—to enable countries to finance their own development. Across history, that's the only way it has ever worked.



In Afghanistan, three million girls and four million boys are in school, compared to just 900,000 students when the Taliban ruled by terror. Today, 77,000 university students, a nine-fold increase from 2001, lead a new generation of global thinkers.

NEW CHAMPIONS

KARIS GRAHAM, SENIOR ADVISOR TO CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

I first heard of USAID while working in Afghanistan as a Senior Social Scientist for the Department of the Army. It was then that I really came to appreciate this Agency. I would hop rides with outgoing MRAPS, and I'd sometimes sit next to someone from USAID. I will never forget one USAID Foreign Service Officer who brought shovels along to a meeting with tribal leaders, so he could talk with them about farming.

After my return from Afghanistan, I passed USAID while jogging down 14th Street. Even though I'm a military chaplain, I thought this would be a different and exciting way to help people. When I speak about my job with other Air Force chaplains, many of them tell me, "I've always wanted to work for USAID." There's a great affinity at DOD for the work we do.

I also served as part of the Honor Guard at Arlington National Cemetery for six years as a chaplain. I was very proud for others there to know that I work for USAID, but also very privileged to be able to grieve with people and hear their stories. That was the toughest assignment of my life—but also the most life-affirming. My work at Arlington occasionally merged with USAID, as my colleagues would sometimes seek me out to help them when their parents passed away and were to be buried at Arlington.

It is wonderful to be a part of an organization that accepts me for who I am. I'm a military chaplain. I'm a Lutheran pastor, and I'm also gay. I was recently promoted to Colonel. For the most part, people at USAID have been incredibly supportive.

There are few within this Agency who don't have good in their hearts—who don't want to do something good for other people. It's an honor to work here.

CAITLIN THISTLE, PROGRAM ANALYST, OFFICE OF POPULATION AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, BUREAU FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

I'm a pastor's daughter, and my faith is definitely what propelled me into international development. I'm not alone. Many of our partner communities and organizations are religious, and it's important to understand where they are coming from.

My Aunt Sally was born and raised in a tiny town in Kentucky, and she never left. The morning that Raj delivered the National Prayer Breakfast speech, she saw him on TV, and she sent me a text saying she was watching a very cool speech by my boss. She said that she was proud of me.

Since then, she regularly follows what I do. I know that his speech made it easier to explain my job to my family when I go home during the holidays.

We have a moral obligation as the United States of America to help people. We have an obligation to work towards a better realization of what God intended in the world, and it is not what we have now. This must be ecumenical. The only way for me to be a faithful Christian and be in international development is to think that there are many paths to God.

MARK BRINKMOELLER, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

In my three years here, I have been struck by how much USAID is trying to do—connecting overseas in different ways, connecting in the United States in different ways. In one sense, it's frenetic. In another sense, it is exhilarating.

When I interviewed for this job, I told Raj that I wanted to think big. When I was at the ONE campaign, we organized a call with Raj and about 75 American pastors. That's fantastic. On the other hand, I wanted the Administrator of USAID to be in front of thousands.

We need to think bigger.

In church circles, sometimes we think small and that can be good. A faithful group can be very small and mighty. But you have to also think about scale and reach.

What's been interesting is that we've done both small and big. We've met with small groups in San Francisco, Detroit, and Washington, D.C. We've met with faith motivated businesspeople and community leaders who work in inner-city congregations. We've met with a cross-section of the faith community, including Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Christian groups.

But we have also gone big. Can't get much bigger than the National Prayer Breakfast, Catalyst, or Saddleback Church.

I think I was surprised by the eagerness that people have to partner with USAID. There is an eagerness for people who want to do good. The vision of USAID—of scale—is an idea that appeals to people. Leaders like Ward Brehm—he wants to be connected to something bigger.

At the same time, one of Ward's best insights is that we need to tell both a big story and a small story at the exact same time: a very simple story to exemplify what we mean when we talk about reaching for the sky.

Catalyst

Peanut Paste:
Reviving starving children from Somalia to Syria with a life-saving food aid product developed in Rhode Island.

Smart Electric Grid:
Modernizing Mexico's power grid to make it more flexible, efficient, and receptive to clean energy.

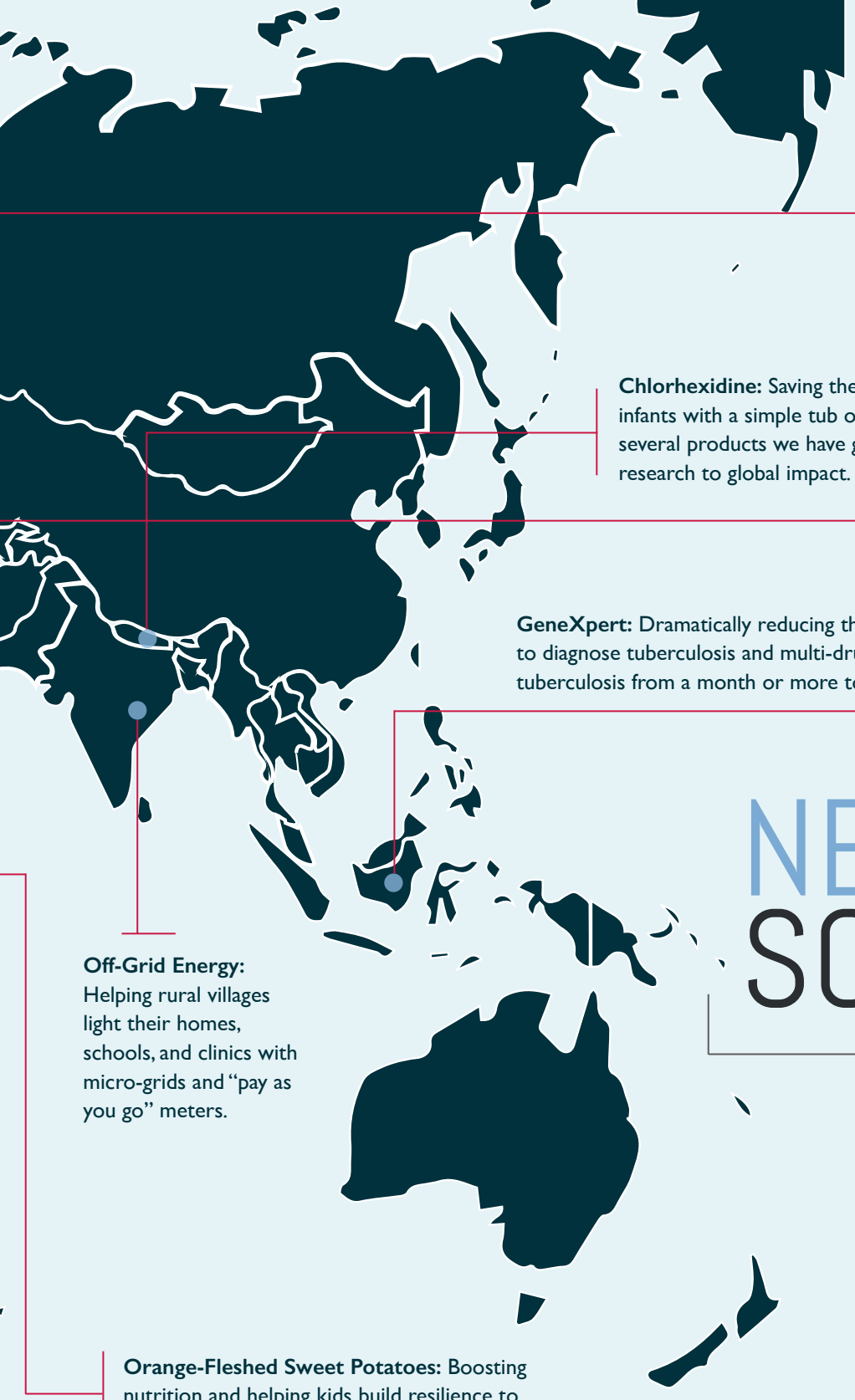
Tablets: Investing in local start-up Surtab and their high-tech tablets that say "Made in Haiti".

Ebola Protective Suits:
Protecting healthcare workers with new solutions from ice-cold personal protective suits to virus-repelling lotions.

Remote Sensing Data:
Predicting famine, monitoring fires, planning for floods, and maximizing harvests through a worldwide partnership with NASA.

E-Payments:
Building a pathway out of poverty by helping families receive salaries, pay bills, and save through mobile money.

Carbon Credit Market: Reducing deforestation, curbing climate change, and incentivizing sustainable market choices.



Global Innovation Fund: Transforming ideas into impact through grants and risk capital in partnership with the UK, Sweden, and others.

Chlorhexidine: Saving the lives of infants with a simple tub of gel, one of several products we have guided from research to global impact.

Bond Market: Taking a historic step in the development of local capital markets with the first municipal bond issuance in Serbia.

GeneXpert: Dramatically reducing the time it takes to diagnose tuberculosis and multi-drug resistant tuberculosis from a month or more to only two hours.

NEW SOLUTIONS

Off-Grid Energy: Helping rural villages light their homes, schools, and clinics with micro-grids and "pay as you go" meters.

Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potatoes: Boosting nutrition and helping kids build resilience to disease with Vitamin A-rich crop varieties.

For more than 50 years, USAID has helped lead the world in promoting public-private partnerships and scientific advances to improve human welfare. Through the U.S. Global Development Lab and a resurgence of technical expertise across the Agency, we are proud to carry this legacy forward with breakthrough solutions that will redefine our future.

JERRY O'BRIEN, DIRECTOR FOR THE CENTER FOR DATA, ANALYSIS, AND RESEARCH, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

I'm a bit of a zealot. I'm animated by the idea of being a change-agent and finding more powerful ways to use science and technology to achieve our goals—better, faster, cheaper, more sustainably.

The Lab has a mandate to do things differently—to take risks. We're structured differently from the rest of the Agency. Our folks in Global Health do a bang-up job saving lives, but they cannot alone do much on urban sanitation. Is that a health problem? A municipal governance problem? A water problem? An engineering problem? It's just too big, and it doesn't fit into anybody's shop. We're structured to do exactly that.

One of the things I love about working at the Lab is that when we put out a solicitation, we get hundreds of responses from people we've never imagined. People who have never even heard of USAID. But they have really good ideas.

If we limit ourselves to asking our traditional partners, we're limiting the universe of possible answers. That is what's great about the Development Innovation Accelerator. In the past, we defined the problem very precisely. We went to a small community of partners who knew exactly how to write their proposals to check every box and get the award. These are amazing contractors—don't get me wrong. But if that's the universe we're going to, then we are drastically limiting our possibilities.

The Development Innovation Accelerator says: Here's the problem we want to tackle. What do you think?

And we get a whole bunch of people around a table. It is very flexible, and it allows for co-creation. So I think what the Lab is doing is truly new.

A new seed can change the calculus of what's possible. An ingenious way to generate demand for prenatal care can lead to a wholesale improvement in child survival. I'm full of optimism about the future of innovation, partly because we have more innovators than ever before. USAID is doing everything it can to motivate innovators to solve these problems.

—Bill Gates

TICORA JONES, DIRECTOR OF HIGHER EDUCATION SOLUTIONS NETWORK, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

I arrived at USAID as an AAAS Fellow with a background in polymer science and engineering. The title of my thesis was "Synthesis and Characterization of ortho-Phenylene Ethynylene Oligomers: A New Scaffold for Foldamer Research."

I use my academic brain differently today. Instead of looking at molecular or biological systems, I look at people systems. It is about making sure that human ecosystems are productive and creative instead of combustible. These environments are hard to measure, but they're critical to innovation. Without that ecosystem, you can't capture lightning in a bottle. You don't have the lightning or the bottle.

That is why I find the Lab so compelling. We knew from Saving Lives at Birth that the demand was out there—that people were starting to take us seriously as an organization that wanted to create disruptive change. In the past, we have received a handful of applications for any program, but the first round of Saving Lives at Birth blew that out of the water.

When we launched the Higher Education Solutions Network, I wasn't surprised to receive 500 concept notes. The goal is to bridge the divide between academic research and local innovation. Both are woven into the Network; both are essential parts of that larger ecosystem.

> Students today travel in ways we never traveled. I went to Sweden in college; my mom went to Germany. Today, these kids are going to Malawi and India—and they're meeting world-changers in local communities.

The social worker in Uganda who wants to take the skills she learned in an innovation and design workshop back to local women. The engineer in Zimbabwe who discovers a global network of partners and realizes that he isn't alone. I have been so inspired by them, and I know that a critical part of our shared success is the systems that foster their work.

NEW SOLUTIONS

BRANDON SITZMANN, RESEARCH TEAM, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

It has been a great experience helping build the Research and Innovation Fellowships program from scratch to place elite American graduate students with institutions in developing countries.

We started out with 58 Fellows in seven countries, and we already have more than 120 young researchers who have expressed interest in the next round.

We've placed fellows with Microsoft in India; the International Organization for Migration in Colombia; and the Ministry of the Environment in Senegal. We just signed an agreement to expand the network with six U.S. universities, including Arizona State University and the University of Chicago.

Our research system in the United States is the envy of the world and for good reason. Through the Lab, we can apply this extraordinary talent and capacity in a very different way to have global impact.

CLARE MUHORO, RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT TEAM, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

I trained as an organometallic chemist and spent 14 years as a professor of chemistry. I am passionate about science and international collaboration. A lot of talent goes untapped, especially in the very places where we work.

I manage a program called PEER—Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research—that provides funding for developing country scientists to collaborate with researchers in the United States. I have really enjoyed building a partnership that address a critical need and tries to maximize potential everywhere.

One of my favorite projects started before I did. Professor Alassane Dicko, a scientist from the University of Bamako, partnered with a National Institutes of Health researcher to work on seasonal malaria chemoprevention. Malaria peaks during the rainy season and dies down when it is dry, so they worked together on generating protocols that target malaria seasonally, instead of spreading resources thinly throughout the year. His protocol is so exciting that our Mission and the Malian Ministry of Health plan on working with Dr. Dicko to scale it up across the region.

I'm excited about USAID's proposal to harness the possibilities of scientific, evidence-based innovation from universities across the United States.

—Senator Chris Coons

In November 2013, Administrator Shah visited a school in Beirut, Lebanon, where USAID has rehabilitated classrooms, provided scholarships, and built science labs. Across the region, we are helping schools change their approach to teaching—embracing lab research and teamwork instead of rote memorization.

FITRIA WAHID, GIS SPECIALIST, INDONESIA

Our Mission was one of the first in the world to make geographic analysis mandatory in project design. With limited resources, we want to make sure we are targeting our projects in the right places. When we're designing new marine programs, for example, we have to look at biodiversity data, conversation targets, and locations of sea-grass, mangroves, and coral reefs. Indonesia has more than 15,000 islands, so geographic analysis really helps us identify where we should focus our work.

We've used GIS to monitor biodiversity, deforestation, or forest fires, but the tool has a lot to offer in other sectors, especially in education or health. For example, we can use GIS to record the locations of pregnant women and map travel time to clinics, or map the distribution of schools across the country.

I feel lucky to be here. I grew up as part of the middle class in Indonesia. We knew there were problems, but not everyone paid attention and actually did something to help address and solve them. With USAID, I can actually contribute to solving these problems.

CARLOS LAMADRID, DEPUTY PROGRAM OFFICER, ETHIOPIA

GIS (Geographic Information System) is a tool, but at the same time, it also represents a way of thinking about what you do through a geographic lens. Once you start overlaying different kinds of data, it tells a bigger story.

In Lima, an education officer asked me to help her map the schools where we work. That's a pretty simple request that anyone could fulfill with a paper map and some pushpins. But it turned out that she was really interested in mapping these schools against the locations of mining concessions.

"What I really want to know," she said,
"is whether it is possible to cultivate public-private
partnerships for education with these concession holders."
Now that's way beyond pushpins on a map.
That's a really cool analysis.

Using some simple spatial methods, we narrowed a list of about 1,000 or more concessionaries down to fewer than two-dozen potential partners.

Technology does not need to be new to have impact. In Peru, we gave a small grant to a local organization called the "Movement for Peruvians Without Water." In this particular case, they worked with a farming community that lived on a hilltop without access to water. The community had to purchase municipal water and pay for it to be delivered by truck. It was enormously expensive.

In the winter months in Lima, thick fog rolls inland off the Pacific Ocean. It rarely rains, but the air is heavy with moisture. Our grant helped build fog-catchers—large mesh nets that slow down and trap the moisture. While the materials are modern, the practice itself is ancient. Within one week of installing these fog-catchers, three-quarters of the community's water tanks—each with a 1,000 liter capacity—were full.

It is a small example, but this project had an immediate impact on the income and livelihood of this community. It also helped build the capacity of our local partners to continue this work for other communities.

That is what I love. That is what really drives me.

Indonesia's coral reefs have increasingly come under threat from climate change, overfishing, pollution, and disease. Across the region, we're working to protect the environment and advance sustainable development. Through the Coral Triangle Initiative, more than 20 communities in five countries are more effectively managing their local marine resources. Romeo Gacad | AFP

NEW SOLUTIONS

JOE MASCARO, GRAND CHALLENGES TEAM, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

I always knew I wanted to be a scientist.

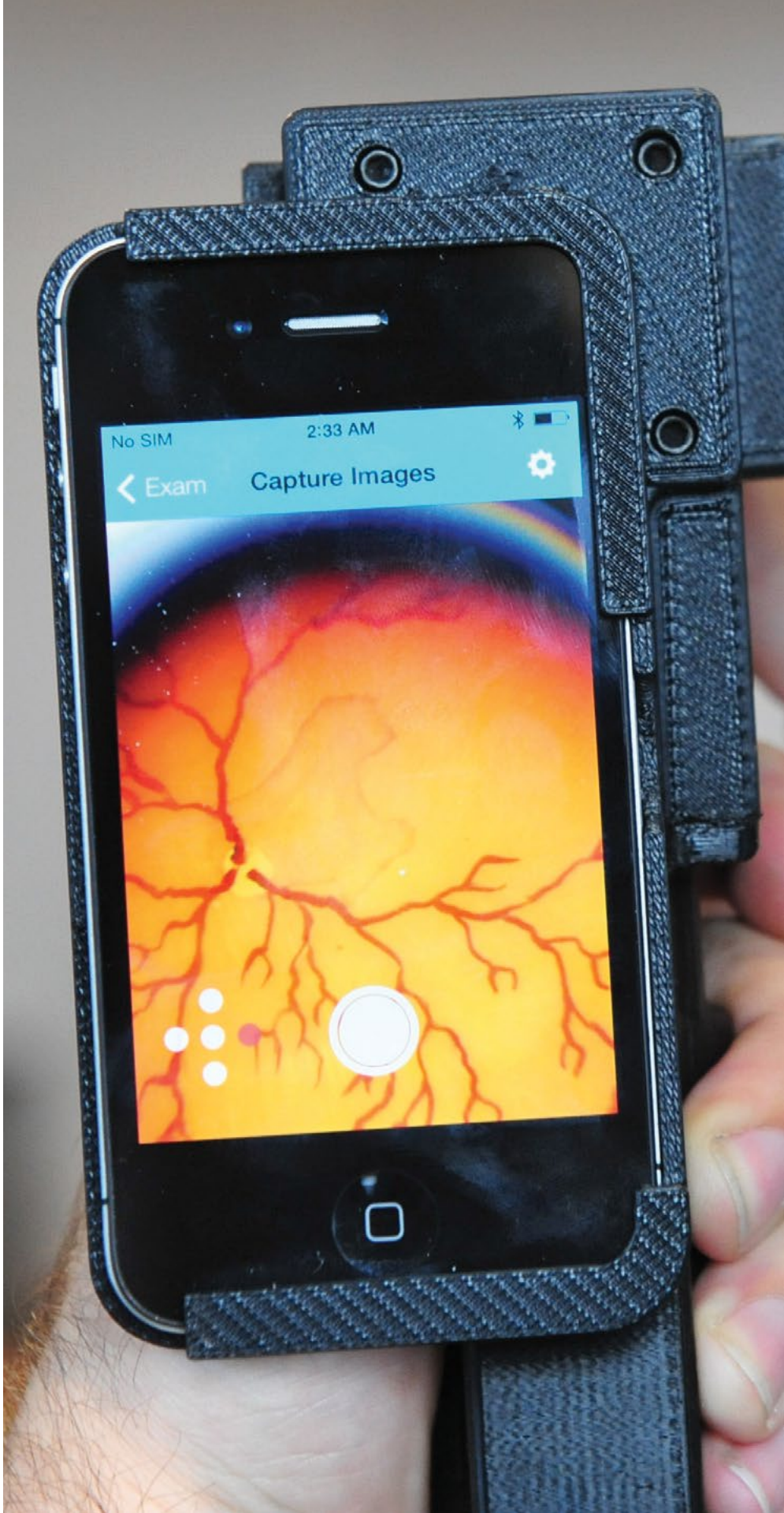
First, I wanted to study oceans and then I wanted to be an astronomer. And then I went to Costa Rica, and tropical forests completely defied my expectations. I became enamored.

A whole team showed up for my interview at USAID—from the GeoCenter, the Grand Challenges, and the Higher Education Solutions Network. It had this vibrant feel of barely managed chaos.

The development community and ecologists are not natural friends, but I think ecologists can learn a lot from the positive moral energy that exists in global development.

The Development Credit Authority recently launched an effort with the Althelia Climate Fund to encourage private companies to invest in carbon offsets in tropical forests. We need to think big about how we're going to tackle this. The largest field-monitoring plot in the world is about 50 hectares. It takes a team of 12 people about 8 months to assess the carbon content of those 50 hectares. An airplane with remote sensing can do it in 8 seconds.

My background is really on the supply side—using airborne remote sensing to produce these carbon credits—but I have realized how important it is for scientists and policymakers to cross-pollinate.



MATTHEW DRUCKENMILLER, GEOCENTER, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

My background is in glaciology. I studied changing sea ice conditions in the Artic and worked with native communities along the Alaskan coast to assess the impact of climate change on their livelihoods.

I think USAID has an interesting role to play in making the connections between technical and human issues. I just got back from Central Asia, where I was part of a project design team on transboundary water cooperation. It's a very complex region with the potential for conflict over water resources. We visited a site on the border of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where USAID has installed equipment in the river to monitor how much of the river is being pulled to each site. It's a straightforward project, but it's giving communities on both sides of the border a reason to work together.

The world of natural sciences moves just so slowly—studies take forever. But many development problems need to be solved urgently. I think I will move faster now.

CORI RINGHOLZ, DATA ANALYST, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

The launch of the Lab was an incredible day. It was impressive to see Secretary Clinton and Administrator Shah and think about the legacy they are leaving behind for development—especially in evidence-based decision-making. A few years ago, we just had a handful of AAAS Fellows at USAID, and now we have more than any other government agency. The commitment to have these kinds of technical experts in house is really exciting.

My background is in infectious disease epidemiology, and I've gotten very involved at USAID in using big data and social media analytics for development. In the Philippines, we're trying to create an algorithm to provide early warning for communicable disease outbreaks following a natural disaster using Twitter data.

We're looking for any signal we can detect—from tweets about health to tweets about failing infrastructure like smelly water or broken pipes. Hopefully, this tool gains us more time. For some diseases, that extra day of warning could make a lot of difference.

With support from the U.S. Global Development Lab, a team from the University of California, Berkeley designed CellScope, a tool to turn your smartphone into a diagnostic-quality microscope. Richard Nyberg | USAID

NEW SOLUTIONS

KYRIACOS KOUPPARIS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISOR, MIDDLE EAST BUREAU

My position is brand new. The idea behind it was to figure out how science and technology can advance development in the Middle East. It's quite challenging. There are just so many conflicting priorities. Any Arab government would love to be the next Silicon Valley. But you can't talk about research collaboration when you don't even have functioning universities.

We often hear that water problems in the Middle East are not technical. They don't necessarily need more pipes or pumps. It's a governance issue. And that's true—and our Missions do focus on policy.

But politics aside, policy aside, dysfunctional governments aside, how do we use science and technology to make a difference?

The last time I was in Jordan, I visited a community that now has access to clean water. It's a basic cistern. It's not revolutionary, and that is absolutely fine. A lot of technologies that can make a difference are basic technologies. It's not going to be the iPhone 6.

We are fortunate because our mandate is to help as many people as we can. I think that is a luxury that other agencies don't have.

JARAH MEADOR, PRIZES TEAM, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

I'm from a tiny town in Texas, and USAID simply wasn't on my radar. I'm a cancer biologist, and I've also served as a medic in the U.S. military. The first time I heard about USAID, I thought; "Wow, development is a whole side to defense that I never considered."

I think that what we do in development innovation is a great model for small rural towns. Last year, I designed the Desal Prize for innovations in brackish water desalination. Here's the most interesting part: we're partnering with the Bureau of Reclamation, which was founded by Teddy Roosevelt 100 years ago. They cover the 17 most western states, so you wouldn't necessarily think they're a natural partner for us. But they're desalination experts with experience working on Indian reservations. These reservations have many of the same needs as developing countries, including running new technology off renewable energy because there isn't really a grid. So as a result of this prize, we're working with a totally new constituency in America.

I never thought I'd become a prize expert. On my very first day here, when my boss told me that he wanted me to develop a brackish water desalination prize, I had to google "brackish." You can't sit back and wait at this agency. If you are under-utilized, seize an opportunity and get over-utilized fast.

With help from USAID, a Palestinian farmer grows strawberries for export using a hanging plant system and computerized irrigation. Bobby Neptune | USAID

NEHAL SANGHAVI, SENIOR ADVISOR FOR INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP, INDIA

I would argue that until a couple of years ago, we had become irrelevant to the private sector in India. Today, I look back on Dr. Shah's visit to Mumbai two years ago as a real turning point.

We had 19 meetings and events with the private sector and media in two days, and we're still feeling the positive benefits. We have engaged a wide variety of partners from high-net-worth individuals to foundations to local Chambers of Commerce. We grew the Millennium Alliance—a platform to support social innovations—from three to eleven partners, including India's largest private bank. That was a huge shot in the arm for us. Once we became relevant with a few private sector players, many more opened their doors.

Over the last few months, we've been able to engage over 36 new private sector players. I'm not just talking about entering into a partnership by signing a pledge or committing in-kind resources. These are private sector groups who have a strong commitment to development; think they can play a part in meeting our goals; and who bring real cash resources to the table.

The toughest part in this transition has been getting ourselves out of the way—overcoming our own reluctance.

We identified a cohort of Private Sector Champions and created a Partnership Action Plan that each technical office follows. Every month we recognize a Partnership Player of the Month—a small gesture that reminds us to take this emphasis seriously. If I am not mistaken, we may be one of the few—if not the only—Missions in the world that has a satellite office to do nothing but engage with the private sector.

TRANG NGO MINH, HIV/AIDS PREVENTION SPECIALIST, VIETNAM

The Agency has changed a lot, but I've also changed. As a technical advisor, I work at a very practical point: HIV prevention. People injecting drugs. Female sex workers. Men who have sex with other men. These are our clients. In the past, we traditionally only worked with our implementing partners to reach them, and that's all we knew.

Now, we need to think beyond—to the private sector. I am managing a new program called Healthy Markets. We want to catalyze private sector investment for HIV/AIDS goods and services. This is very innovative. After working with the Global Development Lab, I have many ideas I want to apply, like using social media to create demand among the key populations we work with.

I am inspired by others who think out loud and outside the box. I'm a big fan of Picasso. There is no right way to look at something. Upside down. Sideways. Sometimes, it can seem new and different. But when you explore it further, there is beauty.

ANUPAMA RAJARAMAN, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION, INDIA

I don't remember the precise moment I knew I wanted to work in development, but now I can't imagine it any other way. USAID is my second country. The work we do here has the potential to change the trajectory of development for millions of people.

In India, we are at the forefront of a new model of development. The heart of our strategy is partnership—whether with the government, the private sector, or civil society. We succeed together. We fail together. It is really exciting.

Last year, we launched the READ Alliance to catalyze a movement around early grade reading. India has come a long way in education, but learning outcomes are still unacceptable. So we partnered with Google to bring a bunch of app developers together in a room with local NGOs. We talked about the challenges facing students, parents, and teachers and then told the developers to have at it. Now we're working with Google to see how we might pilot their educational apps in local schools.

Each of us brings our distinct talents to this mission. Google brings their tech skills. We bring a deep connection with local NGOs. And the education community brings their extensive knowledge. We figure it out together. It is new and unique, and we've never done anything like it before.

Anita Khemka

Kendra Helmer | USAID

PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN, SENIOR ADVISOR, BUREAU FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

I grew up in a tiny, tiny village in Jamaica, and I've known my whole life I wanted to help people. Getting this opportunity to work for this President at this time in history—that's a no brainer.

My first year was a blur. We kept asking: what was the Obama Administration's approach to development in Latin America? We realized that our purpose is to put ourselves out of business. But to do that, we knew we needed to be in fewer countries and invest in fewer sectors. We needed to empower different communities, and we needed to build new partnerships.

Since then, we have built about 68 active public-private partnerships in the region and changed country strategies from Honduras to Colombia. Between these partnerships and the Development Credit Authority, we have leveraged $250 million in the last two years. It's a sea change.

We want to send a message to these countries that we can be equal partners. "You were once beneficiaries of ours; now you can manage your own business, and we can walk this path together." As a result, we have trilateral partnerships with Colombia on citizen security; with Chile on agricultural development; and with Brazil on food security.

This is by far the most fun I've ever had in a job. To be able to give little Palomas in the Americas a new lease on life—that's just phenomenal.

MIKE MULDOON, INVESTMENT OFFICER, DEVELOPMENT CREDIT AUTHORITY

During my first year as an investment officer, I completed only two deals. Then last year, I did over four times that amount. It has been very rewarding to develop these skills, since our Agency draws its strength from its technical expertise.

Last year, DCA hit a new record in the numbers of transactions we completed (54) and the capital we made available through guarantees ($769 million) in one year, which is really a testament to the leadership of Ben Hubbard and Mike Metzler. DCA fits neatly into USAID Forward and the "new model of development." Our tool can be called on regardless of sector or environment—regardless of whether we are working in an undeveloped market like Cameroon or Sierra Leone or a comparatively more developed market like Nigeria or South Africa.

I am the Relationship Manger for GE, which I was skittish about at first. But it has been great. GE is very engaged and enterprising. We recently did a $10 million loan guarantee to support the health sector in Kenya. It was a straightforward deal—not a huge number. But the twist was that GE actually paid the cost of the guarantee at zero expense to our Agency. It was win-win from all sides. It goes back to the core of the "new model" and our desire to engage with the private sector in a meaningful way.

My second favorite deal was in Nigeria with Standard Chartered Bank. We were in the country doing a standard market assessment when we got a call from Washington to find a way to help support Nigeria's historic hand-over of power companies to the private sector. We worked with the Mission and Power Africa team and ended up building the single largest loan we ever guaranteed as an office. It came through at an incredibly important time for these companies and the development of Nigeria's energy sector.

That is what is so exciting about DCA. It is an exercise in problem-solving. The solution is always new and different.

CHRIS POWERS, FIELD INVESTMENT OFFICER, SOUTH AFRICA

I was living in Chicago, trading at a firm. I was engaged to be married, and things were going really well at work. I knew where the market was at all times. I was really hooked. Then the offer from USAID came in.

I called my Dad. He grew up really poor, and all he wanted was better for his kids. I thought he'd say, "Stick it out at work and wait for the pay-out." Instead he told me to accept the offer: "This is where your heart is."

As private investment officers, our challenge is encouraging greater investment in Africa. So how do we do that? One way I thought of was go to banks and investors and ask for their stalled pipeline. I want to filter it for development objectives. Maybe one is a tobacco farm—that's out. Maybe another is an ag-processor that's surrounded by bad roads or can't get a loan for new equipment. Well, USAID can mitigate that. Or if we can't, perhaps USTDA or EXIM or OPIC has the right set of tools. Then, I propose that we repackage it and bring it back to the banks. This is the exciting stage. The next exciting stage is getting your hands dirty and getting a transaction done.

Thinking back, it was the very first day at USAID that was the most extraordinary. We had to take an oath. I'd never had a job where I had to take an oath before you got started. This felt more important than just any job.

KAY MCGOWAN, DIGITAL FINANCE TEAM LEAD, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

Access to finance remains the great common denominator in development. I would imagine that 100 percent of the people we serve do not have safe, affordable tools to manage their finances or mitigate risk.

In Afghanistan, for example, there was an incredibly low literacy rate, very limited radio access, and almost no working landlines. But information technology infrastructure connected vast swaths of the population very quickly. In just a few years, a network of commercially sustainable providers covered 90% of the areas where Afghans lived. It was pretty extraordinary, and we began to think about how to leverage that.

I am especially proud of the Better Than Cash Alliance, a network of partners—including Afghanistan—that are committed to transitioning from cash to electronic payments. Cola-Cola recently made the first consumer goods commitment to the Alliance. For them, it's not corporate social responsibility. It's about reforming their business model. They're not only improving their operational efficiencies but also helping build out the digital economy. You cannot catalyze global financial inclusion until the wider ecosystem exists, and the Coca-Colas of the world are going to be essential in that.

It is rare to find something as intellectually stimulating and deeply meaningful as this work. I feel like I have been given a gift.

PRIYA JAISINGHANI, DIRECTOR FOR THE CENTER OF GLOBAL SOLUTIONS, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

Mathematically, it is just hard to imagine that 100% of the world will have access to bank accounts if you are not reaching out through low-cost digital channels. Once you step into the mobile world, you can vote, you can learn, you can bank, you can establish a business. So much potential can be unlocked.

Coming from the Gates Foundation—where I was trained to look at the technical elements of economic challenges—I think I now have a much deeper appreciation of how essential politics, incentives, and historical dynamics are to solving challenges on a global scale. I have learned that extending financial services to the world's poorest families means not only understanding their needs town-by-town. It also means investing in smart technologies that can make the biggest impact.

Two years ago, I was home in Montana and thinking about this change. My stepfather had recently died, and I was reflecting on priorities in my own life. I sat down one day and wrote a concept paper about policies around digital development—about the need for an action-oriented entity that can think about digital infrastructure in a holistic way.

A year later, more than a dozen organizations have now recognized that the way we think about digital development in silos—mobile agriculture, mobile health, mobile education—is detrimental to long-term development. We convened in Greentree, New York, and, at the end of that three-day meeting, we had all committed to changing our practices around how we invest in information and communication technologies. Under our new principles, we are deploying high-tech new tools to accelerate progress against one of humanity's oldest challenges: extreme poverty.

You can mobilize a lot of people around a vision so long as you have done your homework, put some skin in the game, and bend towards optimism.

KIT BATTEN, GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE COORDINATOR

You can actually feel the global conversation on climate change shift from debate to action—an evolution that I also felt at our 2014 Frontiers in Development Forum during a panel discussion with Mary Robinson and Manish Bapna on the links between climate-resilient low-carbon growth and ending extreme poverty. At Frontiers, we emphasized how integrated this work is and how we simply cannot afford to wait to tackle one before the other.

There was a really great article in The New York Times about companies stepping forward to combat global warming. With engagement from USAID and impressive leadership from Indonesia, 40 companies, including four of the largest palm oil producers in the world, pledged to stop tropical deforestation by 2030. As these global companies look to their supply chains with sharper eyes, we are actually changing the way that markets incentivize sustainable development.

The White House recently released an Executive Order on Climate-Resilient International Development, which was largely based on USAID's rigorous 34-point adaptation plan that impressed our interagency colleagues so much they put USAID in charge of the working group. It's testament to our Agency's climate change professionals, who have shown exactly what it means to really integrate solutions in our work every day.

NATHAN GREGORY, FORESTRY AND BIODIVERSITY, BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, EDUCATION, AND ENVIRONMENT

In conservation, our impact might not be seen for twenty or fifty years. So how do we change the way we approach these biodiversity projects to measure results along the way?

That's my job—to help our teams put together really sound theories of change and test the assumptions we make through good monitoring and evaluation. Say you want to build capacity in law enforcement to combat wildlife trafficking. But that's a pretty big jump from theory to impact, so we have to put indicators along the way that will let us know what is working.

In Northern Kenya, we have worked with community conservancies that manage wildlife through ecotourism and anti-poaching patrols. These patrols bring a lot of security, and that has turned out to be a far more persuasive argument for the value of conservation.

We need to be thinking about these bigger issues—security, gender, land tenure, governance, property rights. We have to help develop markets that will support good choices and reward people who are good stewards of the lands.

As an Agency, we are thinking about all these factors. It is a great place to be a scientist from that perspective. Development doesn't lend itself to easy analysis, but there are ways to ground our work in data and evidence. We're pulled in 1,000 different directions, but that tension is good. By having advocates for different angles—economic growth, food security, gender, education—we come up with collaborative solutions.

Bugala Island on Lake Victoria, Uganda, is five times larger than Manhattan and home to 50,000 people. With a guarantee from USAID's Development Credit Authority, the island attracted private sector investment for sustainable infrastructure development, including a solar power generation facility and a solar water supply system.

Drought: In Niger, a region endemically devastated by drought and conflict, we launched a data-driven initiative to help nearly 2 million people break the cycle of crisis.

Earthquake:
In response to the 7.0 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, one of the most catastrophic natural disasters in modern history, we launched the largest food aid distribution and the most effect search and rescue the world had ever seen.

Ebola Epidemic:
In Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, we have coordinated the full capabilities of American government behind a science-based approach to enhance our national security and stop the virus at its source.

Complex Emergency: As we stand with the people of Ukraine in their fight for sovereignty and territorial integrity, we are also providing humanitarian aid to the hundreds of thousands of people affected by the conflict.

Complex Crisis: In the face of devastating conflict and under the looming shadow of famine, we have airlifted food, water, and medicine to remote communities and provided farmers with seeds and tools to restart their livelihoods.

Tsunami: We dispatched disaster experts and mobilized search and rescue in the immediate aftermath of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The Disaster Assistance Response Team included people with nuclear expertise to help the government stabilize their damaged nuclear reactors.

CRISIS & RESILIENCE

In response to an unprecedented level of humanitarian need, we have set a new standard for agility, speed, and innovation in times of crisis. From the Haiti earthquake to the Ebola epidemic, our team's tireless commitment and courage have helped change how the world responds to crisis—saving countless lives and building resilience to future catastrophes.

Civil War: For four years, we have provided millions of Syrian families with emergency food; supported over 300 field hospitals and clinics; and ensured children have the opportunity to go to school across the region.

Famine: As famine devastated Somalia in 2012, more than 7 million Ethiopians safely weathered the worst drought in 60 years thanks to a new emphasis on resilience.

Super Typhoon: Armed with satellite data, we swung into action even before Super Typhoon Haiyan swept ashore in the Philippines in 2013. Less than 10 days later, we had the water system up and running, providing clean water to 250,000 people.

CRISIS & RESILENCE

In October 2014, at the height of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, Nancy Lindborg visited a construction site for a new Ebola Treatment Unit in Monrovia, Liberia. Thanks to the speed, focus, and creativity of the response, the tide was turned against Ebola. Morgana Wingard | USAID

The people of USAID are pioneers. You're working on the front lines of some of the world's toughest challenges. Extreme poverty has plagued us for a long period of time. It is not only a challenge to our values and our sense of humanity, but… it presents us with dangers. It is a challenge to our security.

—Secretary John Kerry

NANCY LINDBORG, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

This has been the most ferocious gallop of four years that I've ever had. When I arrived in October 2010, the focus was on the referendum for independence in South Sudan. Then it transitioned quickly from the Arab Spring to the drought in East Africa and the famine in Somalia to the Sahel drought. Then Syria and South Sudan.

Now we face Ebola, which has been a giant wakeup call for us.

We have to take the global health agenda seriously. Ebola is a wimpy virus. It could have been much worse. The lesson is clear—we need to be paying more attention to fragile states. I think that's also the reason the focus on resilience has taken off. It is maddening to do all of this good work during an emergency and watch it evaporate afterwards. So even as we respond to the crisis in West Africa, we are having simultaneous discussions on building resilience to future shocks.

I've become fiercely protective of our teams, because they work just so incredibly hard. I am filled with a sense of honor for having the opportunity to be here. It is so much harder to leave than I thought it would be.

CRISIS & RESILENCE

DINA ESPOSITO, DIRECTOR, FOOD FOR PEACE

At every moment in time, we feel like we are working to meet overwhelming need. I was 28 when the famine in Somalia happened in the early 90s, and nobody had ever seen that scale of response. Now, we're seeing how a public health emergency like the Ebola epidemic can create a humanitarian crisis.

Our mission has always had bipartisan support in Congress, and that's also been true for our food aid reforms. The end of the story is not yet written, but we're all delighted with the changes in the Farm Bill that allow us to reach 800,000 more people every year with the same resources. We have a whole range of choices—from cash to food—and we're looking carefully at markets to understand when one is better than the other.

There have been many memorable moments. The day when our Ready-to-Use-Therapeutic Food arrived—part of a new generation of food aid commodities that might never have been possible without the urgency of the 2011 famine in Somalia.

Or the day when I stood in a grocery store in a Syrian refugee camp where refugees bought fresh fruits and vegetables with swipe cards. For someone like me—who had been working with refugees since 1989—that was an unimaginable moment.

JULIA ASTURIAS, FOOD FOR PEACE OFFICER, GUATEMALA

I wear many hats. We have an extremely interesting, but challenging country strategy that has focused three presidential initiatives—Feed the Future, Global Health, and Climate Change—in one region: the Western Highlands. We're helping ensure a family has everything they need to thrive: good health, an education, food, reliable income, and a voice in society.

The whole Mission has to work together with the government and private sector across everything we do. It is an uphill battle. But I know it will work, because we have done it in Food for Peace.

When I started in 1991, Food for Peace was a distribution program—and that's it. I didn't know what impact we were having on people, because all I did was count bags of food. But every time we renewed the program, we got better. We utilized state-of the-art nutrition research to reformulate our food aid. We supported home gardens and nutrition education for parents. We honed our approach to monitoring and evaluation, and now we measure ourselves against two clear goals: reducing chronic malnutrition and increasing food security.

Not everybody is convinced that we are better as a unified team. That is what brings me to work every morning. I have one more person to convince that this is going to work.

The Agency's investment in higher quality of life have been paying off for decades.

—Bill Gates

You deal in the nuances of global resources, global poverty, global pandemics, and global problems… I hope you feel as good about what you do, as those who admire you do.

—General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

TOM STAAL, SENIOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

I have served in critical missions at some very pivotal moments—during the 1984-85 famine in the Horn of Africa, the Oslo Peace Accords, and the invasion of Iraq.

Decades after the famine, I returned as Mission Director to Ethiopia, where we helped establish Feed the Future. To me, it felt like we were finally getting this right. We had been spending hundreds of millions of dollars on food aid and almost nothing on agricultural development. Through Feed the Future, we could look at issues of policy, marketing, and seed production: good basic development that tackles the core drivers of poverty and suffering.

I came back to Washington a few days before Super Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines.
Despite the typhoon's incredible punch, we had a model response.
It was effective, efficient, and well coordinated with the U.S. military, the UN, NGOs, and the local government.

A few key elements made the difference, but none more so than our focus on preparedness. We had prepositioned teams and supplies because we'd been tracking weather patterns for days in advance. For years, we had been working closely with first responders and the military in the region so they knew how to work with us during a disaster. All of that came together very seamlessly when the typhoon hit, and lives were undoubtedly saved.

We still struggle with the long-term aftermath of disasters. Do displaced families just go back to living on the same floodplains they lived in before?

That is why a focus on resilience is so important. We need to be developing not only actual health and agriculture systems but also the capacity of those systems to withstand shocks. We need to help farmers not only harvest greater yields but also cope with disaster when a flood devastates their crops.

The experience we have had in the Horn of Africa has shown that we can successfully strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities. In 2012, Ethiopia had a drought—as bad as the droughts in the mid-80s—but people didn't die. The system we had invested in worked.

We're never going to stop droughts from happening, but we can make sure people have the capacity to bounce back. It's a long-term process, but we're finally on that path.

A survivor walks among the debris of houses destroyed by Super Typhoon Haiyan in Tacloban in November 2013. Armed with satellite data, we deployed disaster experts to the Philippines in anticipation of the storm. Greater flexibility in our historic food aid program enabled us to buy rice on the local market and distribute it immediately. Noel Celis | AFP

ROB JENKINS, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

When you are in the middle of a crisis, you work very long hours, seven days a week. You are exhausted, because the pace is flat out—10 out of 10—and it peaks at 10. But then you look at Nancy Lindborg, Jeremy Konyndyk, Tom Staal, or Raj Shah, and you realize that, wow, they're moving at an 11 or 12. How is that even possible?

It is a marathon, not a sprint, but right now we're sprinting in many different directions at the same time. It is a testament to the systems we've built, but primarily the people who built them.

A few of us have been talking about what happens if there's an earthquake tomorrow. How can we shoulder one more crisis? What would we do? We would respond. We would find a way, and we would save lives.

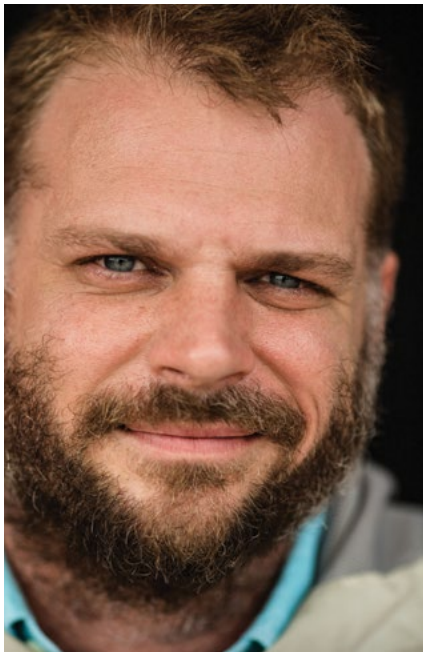
> We don't have a whole lot of jobs in development, and we need to reserve every single one for someone who wants to save the world.

Our stakeholders demand better, as do our customers. The people in Ukraine demand better. The people in South Sudan demand better. The kids in a clinic in Syria, they demand better. They demand passion.

To serve is to really live,
and you are serving at the highest level.

—Alan Mulally, former CEO of Ford Motor Company

Photo series: Morgana Wingard | USAID



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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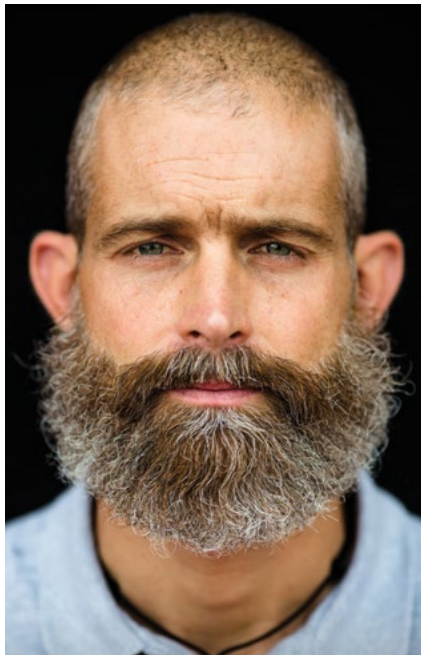
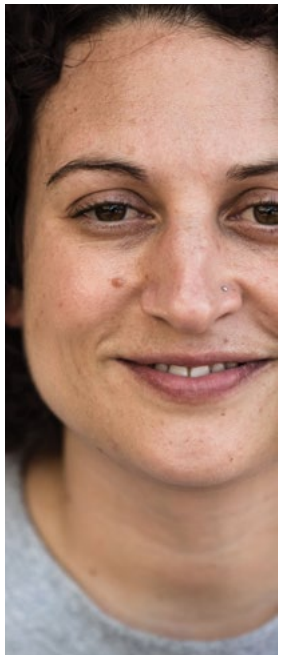
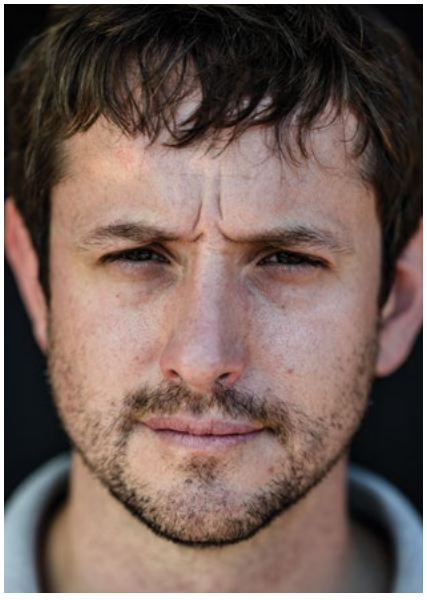

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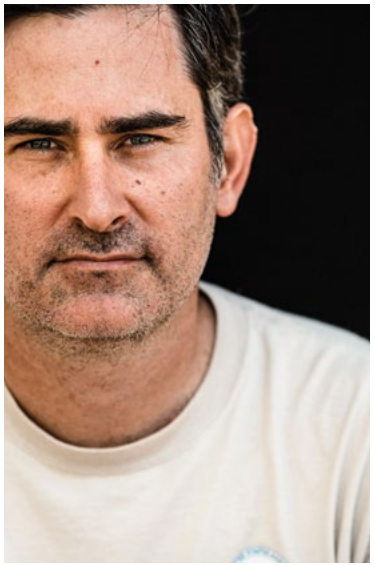

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NATALIE HAWWA, COMMUNICATIONS OUTREACH SPECIALIST, OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

I worked in fashion for several years producing photo shoots in New York City. It was glamorous and exciting. As I got older, I realized I wanted a job where I could be not only creative but also intellectually inspired. I decided to move to the Middle East, where I worked in the Palestinian refugee camps and then on the Iraq crisis. Just as I was ready to come home, the first Syrian refugees started crossing into Lebanon.

That was the first big, urgent humanitarian crisis that I worked on. The winter of 2013-2014 was supposed to be the worst winter in the Middle East in decades. I remember trying desperately to pitch the story to reporters: "Don't you want to know what the United States is doing to help keep Syrians warm?" But no one really wanted to listen.

The No Lost Generation campaign did receive a lot of attention. The idea behind it was simple: we're at risk of losing an entire generation of children in this crisis— children who have lost their homes, their schools, maybe even their families.

People have said the same thing for Liberia. During the height of the crisis, it felt like we were at risk of losing an entire generation to the Ebola epidemic. I arrived in Monrovia on September 19th, shortly after President Obama visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta to demonstrate the seriousness of our response.

In Liberia, you were greeted by people in face-masks and gloves. Your temperature was taken dozens of times a day. You don't touch or hug. You are mitigating a threat you can't see and have never dealt with before. After a couple of weeks, it wears on you. I remember walking back from the U.S. Embassy past kids playing in the street. One little girl ran up to me and hugged my knees. She was smiling and laughing. If she was a refugee, I would have picked her up. It was the first human touch I'd had in weeks.

Every day I was there, it felt like the situation was getting better. When I first arrived, there were fewer than ten burial teams that we supported. When I left, we had 56 teams. That was in just six weeks.

Returning to Liberia in mid-December for my second deployment on the Ebola response was intimidating. I didn't know what to expect. But almost immediately I could feel a different and more positive energy.

On Christmas Eve we attended a holiday celebration show at the Barclay Training Center, where the 101st Airborne Division troops live. One of the performances was a group of kids dancing to Liberian hip-hop with the biggest smiles ever on their faces! Over the past few months, it has occurred to me that I have witnessed humanity at its best: dedicated Liberians working side-by-side with my USAID DART colleagues to stop Ebola; the ever-inspiring Ebola survivors who fought for their lives and won; and now, smiles returning upon people's faces as life is starting to slowly come back to normal.

Certainly the fight is far from over as even one case of Ebola is dangerous and can quickly spread, but I have witnessed how diverse communities of humanitarians can come together at the height of crisis to make a difference.

Photo series: Morgana Wingard | USAID


1. Patric
2. Reube
3. Emman

CRISIS & RESILENCE

In Liberia, a response team educates community members about how to protect themselves and their loved ones from Ebola. Without question, the effectiveness of safe burial teams and widespread behavior change helped turn the tide against the epidemic. Morgana Wingard | USAID.

METTE KARLSEN, FOOD FOR PEACE OFFICER, EBOLA TEAM LEAD, FOOD FOR PEACE

When I walked into the Disaster Assistance Response Team room in Monrovia in September, the air was charged. Everyone was so focused on doing all they possibly could to help the people of Liberia stop Ebola. No other country in the world has the capacity, imperative, or specialized abilities that the U.S. has to help those affected by disasters.

When I arrived in Monrovia, the DART team leader told me to look six, twelve months down the road. From a food security perspective, I knew we needed to position ourselves for the worst. Closed borders mean less trade, less money, and less food moving around.

How are people going to buy food when their food stocks run out? Will they have to sell their animals or farming tools? Will they have to eat their seed stock? What is going to happen the next planning season?

I am concerned that the hungry season is going to be a longer and more difficult this year.

Our mission in Food for Peace hasn't change, but how we achieve it has. The recent food aid reforms give us much more flexibility and space for creativity. Five years ago, our support to the Ebola response would likely have been all in-kind food aid commodities from America. Today, it's mostly cash for local and regional sourcing of food and vouchers for hungry people to buy food locally. These response options mean that we can invest in local and regional economies and market systems, which is good for development.

ERIC KING, INNOVATION SPECIALIST, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

At the height of the Ebola crisis, there were fears that the telecommunications infrastructure was going to topple; that healthcare workers weren't being paid; that whole regions of countries weren't reporting their Ebola cases. At the time, models were projecting there could be 1.5 million people with Ebola by 2015.

Then the curve broke. And those of us on the data team shifted our focus to understanding why. It could have been for a couple of reasons: 1) the models don't work; 2) we didn't have enough good data; 3) we were actually doing a really good job. It is almost certainly a combination of all three.

Perhaps what surprised me the most was the ability of the Liberian people to adapt and change the most common and, in some ways, most rooted aspects of human interaction. No one touches each other; no one shakes hands. There's no hugging in Liberia. The capacity of the Liberian people—an entire nation—to change their behavior is what broke the curve. They changed the way they bury bodies. Think about that. Think about how personal and spiritual a practice that is.

This crisis was just so different from any other, but there are specific investments we can make to get comprehensive, high-quality data faster. One example is a project we were already working on to connect databases of health care workers with mobile network operators, so we can send text messages en masse. In a crisis, it enables us to have a two-way conversation with the entirety of the nation's healthcare workforce.

I have been just so impressed by how many people dropped everything—in an environment of fear and uncertainty—and started working on this as hard as they could.

I had a pretty successful scientific career going in planetary physics when I joined USAID. A lot of my colleagues in the scientific academic community were surprised when I told them I was leaving, and they always want to know when I'm coming back. I still publish papers with them. I just had a paper come out this week called "Magnetostrophic Balance as the Optimal State for Turbulent Magnetoconvection."

But when I told my colleagues about our Agency's response to Ebola, they stopped asking me when I'm coming back. They see that this is as important as it gets.

TIM CALLAGHAN, SENIOR REGIONAL ADVISOR FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

I was a Wall Street guy. My mother cried for a week when I resigned my position and became a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. I've lived here in the region with my family ever since.

In the last six years, I have been the DART team leader for four major emergencies, including the Haiti earthquake and the Ebola epidemic in Liberia.

Every waking moment that I'm not on an emergency response I'm thinking about two things. First, how we can help governments better prepare for disasters. We help them set up incident command centers and train their own urban search and rescue teams. Second, that we have plans in place to move at a moment's notice.

> On January 12, 2010, I was getting ready to take my wife out to dinner.
> A few minutes later, the Haiti earthquake killed 230,000 people.

We had search and rescue teams on the ground within 22 hours—crawling into buildings that were still shaking. We brought five family members down whose children were buried in the rubble of Hotel Montana. I was proud that we stood there and answered every question they had—as painful as it was.

The plans we have in place right now enable us to respond to 2-4 events at the same time. This year was the first time in our history that two to four DART teams were active at once. In August, two DART teams were stood up in the same week for Iraq and Liberia.

I'll never forget what Raj said to me during the Ebola response: "Be creative." It isn't always easy. There are established rules and regulations. But it worked. Today, we don't have the catastrophic numbers people feared early on because of rapid, creative interventions, from new protective gear to safe burial teams to Power Africa generators for clinics.

It is an honor to me, to be honest—to work with such talented folks. When tough things happen, they run towards them. Not away.

One of our core principles is when friends are in trouble, America helps... Our military personnel and USAID team do this better than anyone in the world.

—President Barack Obama

Several weeks after the devastating earthquake, Tim Callaghan talks with children about cholera prevention at a community gathering near Mirebalais, Haiti. Kendra Helmer | USAID

ELENITA LAHENS, HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST, HAITI

I was on my way home when my car started shaking. No one knew what to do. We were never taught about earthquakes in school.

A man carrying a bleeding girl knocked on my car window. I wasn't far from the hospital, so I turned around and took them there. That's when I realized something really bad had happened. I couldn't leave the hospital—not with all those people who needed help. But there were so many people who were hurt, and no doctors. It was impossible to know what was wrong with them, and everyone was screaming.

I went out with the rescuers the next few nights because they needed translators. A lot of people, including many Americans, died when Hotel Montana collapsed.

But five days later, after everyone had given up hope, they rescued Nadine Cardoso—one of the owners of the Hotel—from the rubble. I'll always remember that.

Of course, about two months after the earthquake, the surge of technical staff arrived to begin recovery programs, and we had to work very quickly in HR to support them. I was awarded Foreign Service National of the Year for the work I did during those months.

CAPTAIN COLLEEN GALLAGHER, NAVY LIAISON TO USAID, OFFICE OF CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION

I deployed to Haiti immediately after the earthquake on the USNS Comfort—one of our nation's two hospital ships. We had not even neared Haiti's port when the helicopters started arriving. By the end of that first day, we went from a census of zero to 80 patients—most of whom had significant trauma. We had no idea where they were arriving from. The helicopters just kept coming. You can imagine that the air traffic controllers were quite exhausted by the end of the day. None of these pilots were cleared to land on the deck.

I went ashore the next day. We had two USAID personnel on the ship, and they connected to me to their teams on the ground. From that day on, I met the USAID team every day, either before or after I went ashore to coordinate incoming patients and, later, arrange their transfer home.

We didn't need just surgeons and trauma specialists, but also midwives, nurses, and pediatricians. Seven babies were born on the Comfort, including a set of twins. One pregnant woman was miraculously pulled from the rubble of her home. On the x-ray, you could see her crushed pelvis and a little shadow of her healthy baby. They both survived.

And then there were the aftershocks. The Comfort is huge—the size of three football fields. All of a sudden, you feel the entire ship shimmy and make grinding noises as the aftershocks vibrated up the anchor. It was as if you could hear the anchor dragging on the floor of the ocean. We had a couple of those, and it was very scary for the patients.

Every time I talk about that experience, it's like I am back there again.

Paul J. Richards | AFP (Top Left); Kendra Helmer | USAID (Middle Right); Paul J. Richards | AFP (Bottom Right)


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USAID

Sophia Paris | AFP

The easy work and the popular work can be left to many hands. But this work requires the effort of committed and dedicated citizens.

—President John F. Kennedy

NANCY RUPPEL PRESSA, OFFICE MANAGER, OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVES

I met my husband a few months after the earthquake in Haiti. He worked in an IDP camp with children during the day and for USAID's motor pool at night.

He was a little nervous that my work brought me into the rougher neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince. As a field program manager for OTI, I worked closely with local communities. In one area, we renovated a building to serve as an art center. I am so proud of that building, because young artists now have a place where they can paint and sell their work. In another area—the birthplace of Haitian music—we helped start a music school and provide a small grant for instruments.

We also renovated sidewalks. It may not sound like a big deal, but it's one of my favorite memories.

On one street, there was just a curb along a wall that was covered with graffiti. We worked with the community to install solar streetlamps. They planted trees in tires, and we built the sidewalk around them. Local artists used the wall as their canvas. So instead of just having a regular old sidewalk, the community also had trees, paintings, and solar lamps.

When you work in these neighborhoods, it breaks your heart to see the poverty, the trash, and the violence. But you also fall in love—as I did—because it is alive with hope.

ONE FAMILY

USAID MOROCCO

Nearly 10,000 strong across 80 countries, we are educators and engineers, epidemiologists and economists, procurement specialists and talent managers. In the last five years, we have hired more than 1,100 new professionals, nearly doubled the size of our Foreign Service, and invested in our world-class cadre of Foreign Service Nationals. A diverse and spirited community, we all share a fierce commitment to our nation, our mission, and our extended USAID family.

USAID ZAMBIA

USAID EL SALVADOR

USAID ARMENIA

IN MEMORY

Although our community stretches around the world, we are bound closely together not only by our sense of mission, but our concern and compassion for one another. It is an extraordinary strength. It enables us to support each other in times of grief, and it empowers us to continue the work of our fallen colleagues. We cherish the memory of Ragaei Abdelfattah, Toni Tomasek, and the members of our family who have died as heroes—in service to our country and our mission of providing help to those in need.

Administrator Shah and General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stand before USAID's memorial wall inscribed with the names of staff who lost their lives in the line of duty.
Mark Burrell | USAID

We are defined by courage and passion and hope and selflessness and sacrifice and a willingness to take on challenges when others can't and others will not… to help those in need… and inspire, thereby, the example of others all in the constant pursuit of building a better world not just for ourselves but for people in every corner of the Earth.

—President Barack Obama

You have the most compelling vision:
to end severe poverty in two decades.
That's worth dedicating your life to.

—Alan Mulally, former CEO of Ford Motor Company

CARLA KOPPELL, CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER

It has been interesting to watch the revitalization of the Agency, its brand, and its role in foreign policy. I came into the Agency in 2010 with the mandate of ensuring that our commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment was woven into USAID's DNA. It is an essential component of getting development right.

When Raj invited me to become Chief Strategy Officer, I thought it was a very important function to fulfill to make sure our change agenda actually stuck. I embraced the opportunity to focus not only on the immediate and urgent but also the long-term and strategic.

Defining our mission statement and core values was one incredibly important component of fostering an esprit de corps and a shared sense of purpose. Through a bottom-up process, we wanted to shape a common goal that had people excited to come to work and empowered to amplify our message.

The process itself was started by our former Counselor Dave Eckerson, who organized focus groups and conducted an Agency-wide survey to solicit new ideas. From there, I worked with Alex Thier and Chuck Cooper to actually write a draft. We used it as a straw man for another round of consultations that were open to the entire Agency. By the end, well over 2,000 people had participated in the process—at least 25% of USAID.

I was reading over my briefing materials on my recent flight to Uganda. The Mission in Kampala wrote a Leadership and Accountability Charter that, lo and behold, wove our core values into their tailored vision.

In Ghana, the Mission hung in their entryway a fantastic plaque with our mission statement and core values because they felt it resonated with them. Seeing our staff embrace the mission statement as their own has been really rewarding. It does matter to people.

Through the Administrator's Leadership Council, we have connected the mission, core values, and approach to a management agenda that encourages accountability and collaboration. As a result of bi-weekly conversations, we all know the priorities across the Agency, and we are able to be more responsive to one another's concerns and challenges. People appreciate the affirmative effort to ensure we are delivering results. As Chief of Staff Margie Sullivan used to say, "USAID needs to be positive and proud." We are integral to U.S. foreign policy, and we will continue to proactively promote that agenda.

The USAID Mission in Nepal holds up cards with our new mission statement and core values. U.S. Embassy Nepal.

I know Congress has a strange way of saying thank you, but we do really very much value the work you do.

—*Senator Ben Cardin*

ROBERT BAKER, ANALYST, HUMAN CAPITAL AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

This is my first job. I've been here 35 years.

I came here right out of graduate school with a Ph.D. in Anthropology. I was all set to go back into another Ph.D. program when my father suggested to me that I should work for a while. So I took a six-month contract at USAID. Had this been the Treasury Department, I might have finished up the job and left. But USAID was different. It wasn't just the mission that led me to stay; it was also the fact that the work we do reflects what's happening in the world at every moment.

I've had many different responsibilities over the years. Now, I'm the workforce planner. I say how many people we need and where we need them.

The Development Leadership Initiative made a world of difference. In the years leading up to the program, the attrition rate was so corrosive that my colleagues and I wrote papers about how we couldn't run this Agency for much longer. Today, 65% of our workforce has been hired after 2008 when the DLI program started. The average age difference between those two groups is a full generation. That's a very big deal.

> Even though we're small, we pack a mighty punch. At interagency events, I sometimes sit next to the guys from Homeland Security or the Department of the Defense. Once this guy from the Navy leaned over to me and introduced himself. "I've never heard of USAID," he said. "How many people do you have?" So I gave him the number of direct hires. "I have ships with more people," he said.

I'm very proud of helping set up the U.S. Global Development Lab. I know how hard it is to drive change, and they're shooting for some very big changes. I literally had to smuggle the first PC into the State Department. Ten of us campaigned for six months to get access to the World Wide Web, and they totally refused. They said it was a toy for academics. But we were academics! They finally gave us email addresses. I was robert@usaid.gov. Later, they got wise and yanked those away. Now we're on Google!

I think it's a rare individual who can work at USAID and not become a changed person.

In Nepal, Feed the Future is helping more than 3,000 farmers diversify into high-value crops. After two crop cycles, the combined average net sales per hectare for farmers is more than $4,300. Farmers earn enough not only to feed their families and send their children to school but also to invest in improved seeds and irrigation tools.

MAUREEN SHAUKET, SENIOR DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR, AFRICOM

A lot of people wonder why I'm at AFRICOM. The answer is easy. The two biggest obstacles to us globally are corruption and instability. All the drivers of violent extremism come from development issues. We have to get this right.

Before I came to Germany, I was Mission Director in Kosovo where most of the people didn't know my background or how much I had worked on USAID Forward. It was fascinating to go from planning to the execution of our reform agenda.

I was able to bring a language and understanding about USAID Forward that made sense to my Mission. It is not Washington's initiative. It is not Raj's initiative. It isn't mine. It is ours, and we can use it to affect change.

It's also not about the targets; it's about what is behind the targets. We have to reengage with host governments and local NGOs on the ground. We can't play it safe. This is what I am most proud of—that there is a package of tools in USAID Forward that Missions can choose from to make really important development decisions.

ZUKI MECIHAN, FRONT OFFICE MANAGER, KOSOVO

I feel like I have lived two lives—one before and one after the war. I was a Turkish language professor, and I gave up a lot to work for USAID. But I'm glad I did.

We are now celebrating 15 years of USAID in Kosovo. Recently, as a sign of appreciation, a local village invited us to join their Iftar. We all went—a big group of us from the Mission—because we had helped provide the town with electricity.

Just before dinner, they turned on the power, and their mosque lit up for the first time since the war. They asked our Mission Director to stand, and they applauded him. It was a very special honor. I cried.

BRUCE MCFARLAND, CHIEF OF OPERATIONAL INNOVATIONS, U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB

In Operational Innovations in the Lab we focus on the type of innovations that improve how USAID does business.

So instead of development innovations, like designing a new solar lamp or scaling a new seed, we look at our Agency's fundamental processes—HR, contracting, program management—and try to figure out ways to innovate.

I'm a retired military officer. I served in the infantry, and then the Army had a wild idea to put me in procurement because I would know what infantrymen really needed. So I bought cruise missiles and space shuttles, though I never did buy anything for the infantry. It was a whole different world. In the end, though, I learned a lot about how to translate what technical experts want into a business relationship that can fulfill those requirements.

In the nine years I've been with USAID, I've served from Botswana to Afghanistan to Jordan. In all those experiences, one of the things I've learned is that there are no concrete solutions. Everything we do has consequences. There are consequences we can anticipate, and a myriad of consequences we cannot. It makes the work of the technical professional on the ground much more difficult than people realize.

With that, I have a huge amount of respect for the technical folks at the Missions who are at the nexus of culture, implementation, and governance—where ideas and capabilities meet. The purpose of procurement is to create the relationships that enable the technical folks the flexibility to react to changes on the ground and seize emerging opportunities. To get results, not just deliverables.

I am absolutely optimistic.

The Federal Acquisitions Regulation is about 2,000 pages of wisdom. It contains years and years of experience. For example, George Washington was not incompetent; he knew that he needed boots for his soldiers at Valley Forge. He had the boots contracted, but there was a procurement problem. They vested the procurement authority in one person—the Quartermaster General—who absconded with the funds. Lesson one: separate the contracting folks from the payment folks. The Federal Acquisitions Regulation reflects a lot of hard lessons.

> There is this famous part of the Federal Acquisitions Regulation that says,
> "If you can't find a rule against it, then you can do it."
> It doesn't just allow innovation and business judgment. It requires it. That is a very powerful authority when it comes to helping technical professionals bring real solutions to the field.

It is very rewarding when you can get things done quickly. When you start to see the numbers roll back in—that the mother-of-child transmission of HIV/AIDS is reduced or that global poverty rate has gone down to 17 percent. And you can see how you helped position that to be possible.

I do believe in empowering contracting officers—giving them wide latitude that increases the learning experience of the organization and improves opportunities for great surprise accomplishments.

With a seed grant from USAID, high-tech start-up Surtab has grown by leaps and bounds in Haiti. Today, it produces 3,000 to 4,000 tablets a month and sells its products from the Caribbean to Africa. The bold start is already spawning new ideas, like the upcoming launch of an app lab. David Rochkind | USAID

DENNIS DIAMOND, SENIOR ADVISOR, HUMAN CAPITAL AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

In my first job, when I was a legal technician, my supervisor said to me, "If you see a problem, fix it."

I think I have carried that mindset for more than 32 years at USAID, especially when it comes to creating flexible personnel legal authorities and innovative personnel programs.

About two years ago, I began developing what is now the Senior Technical Group, which will allow technical experts in our Agency to move through the ranks and into the Senior Foreign Service without having to become Deputy Mission Directors or Mission Directors. They'll have the opportunity to publish, hone their skills, and advance in their fields. With the influx of new officers, we can enable them to stay focused on their areas of expertise and help rebuild USAID's world-class cohort of technical experts.

SULEIMAN SULTANALI, OFFICE OF WORKFORCE PLANNING, HUMAN CAPITAL AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

The daily grind of e-mails and deadlines tends to narrow our focus and make us forget our part in achieving USAID's mission. But if you don't hire the right people or they don't get paid on time, the important work of educating children or eliminating poverty doesn't get done.

Workforce planning has given me a unique window into our Agency's human capital vision. It's helping find the right people with the right skills for the right job at the right time. The U.S. Global Development Lab is a great example. The concept was so revolutionary that it was challenging to conceptualize the Lab's needs and identify the right mix of knowledge and skills for each position.

As a first-generation Somali American, I saw how the worst drought in 60 years ravaged the lives of millions of Somalis in 2011, including some of my relatives. But through it all, USAID was there. It's truly an honor to work here.

HANNAH KIRUNGA, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TRAINER, KENYA

I work in our computing service shop, and when I help somebody, it gives me a lot of joy and motivation. But as an IT professional, you can easily get lost in the technology. You forget what we're trying to do.

Once, at the request of the health team, we visited a center for orphaned and vulnerable children in Kitui. We were helping the finance office assess their systems to determine ways for them to manage money from their farm produce.

I loved it—to see what USAID has actually done in partnership with local communities and organizations. They were really working toward sustainability. What a difference it can make to have better systems.

Jon Hrusa | Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

ONE FAMILY

PETER MALNAK, MISSION DIRECTOR, RWANDA

I joined USAID as an intern 22 years ago. We were a highly decentralized organization with a limited amount of technical expertise and a diffuse focus. That has all changed.

We have emerged over the last three to five years as a well-resourced, highly technically competent organization with a completely different demographic than when I joined. That is testament to the phenomenal recruitment our Agency did through the Development Leadership Initiative program.

Today, we are much more effective—that I assure you.

We know we're effective because we measure our progress and understand our failures. We demand evidence to make decisions. Here in Rwanda, our reviews, project designs, and approvals all must have data behind them.

Through all the change, the one thing that remains constant is that USAID continues to be a family. We are intertwined in the lives of each other. As a result, we have a very strong sense of mission and a deep compassion for one another.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of nutrition education in Rwanda. Once trained, they train others in their community—disseminating messages on nutrition and breastfeeding, improved food handling, growth monitoring, and promoting the creation of kitchen gardens to help reduce malnutrition. Juozas Cernius | Global Communities

DEAN KOULOURIS, CHIEF OF BUDGET DIVISION, BUREAU FOR MANAGEMENT

Back in the summer of 2003, I had a graduate school fellowship to work in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Coordination. We were developing the 2005 budget request at the time, and my office encouraged me to get involved. I was never a budget guy before that, but I saw very clearly how the budget drives policy. I found it fascinating, because you cannot make real policy decisions or have real policy impact without the funding to do it.

The Agency has seen a tremendous amount of growth since 2008. When I started working on USAID's operational budget, it was about a $600 million account. Right now, we're close to $1.5 billion. In a very short amount of time, the operational budget has more than doubled. Most of that increase came from hiring new Foreign Service Officers through the Development Leadership Initiative. Back in 2008, USAID had about 1,000 Foreign Service Officers. Now we're close to budgeting for 1,900. The reach, workforce, and resources of the Agency have all changed dramatically.

But what makes me feel especially good is our emphasis on transparency. In the last four or so years, we've tried to put the spotlight on how operating units spend their money and use data to drive decisions around resource allocation. As a result, we have been able to protect and grow the Agency during a particularly tough budget environment. That is what I take the most pride in.

ONE FAMILY

Secretary Clinton joins Administrator Shah and USAID's senior leadership team for a photo in January 2013. U.S. Department of State.

RAJIV SHAH, ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Development is a team effort. Over the last five years, I have had the privilege of serving alongside an extraordinarily impressive group of senior leaders—from interagency colleagues to civil service to Mission Directors to Foreign Service Nationals. I have relied on their friendship, expertise, and counsel and drawn strength from their unwavering commitment. Under their leadership, we come to work every day to advance a mission that represents the best of American values to the world.

In particular, I would like to thank:

Don Steinberg Mark Feierstein Al Lenhardt James Michel Bambi Arellano Dave Eckerson
Susan Reichle Margie Sullivan Michele Sumilas Ben Hubbard Sean Carroll
Steve Radelet Carla Koppell Bob Leavitt Mark Hannafin Christa White Steve Pierce
Earl Gast Sharon Cromer Nisha Biswal Denise Rollins Anne Aarnes
Jon Stivers Margot Ellis George Laudato Mara Rudman Paige Alexander Alina Romanowski
Susan Fritz Alex Thier Larry Sampler Nancy Lindborg Dirk Dijkerman Tom Staal
Beth Hogan Janet Ballantyne Eric Postel Mary Ott Charles North Mike Yates Paul Weisenfeld
Tjada McKenna Bill Garvelink Ariel Pablos-Mendez Ann Mei Chang Andy Sisson
Alex Dehgan Maura O'Neill Barbara Larkin Chuck Cooper Angelique Crumbly Drew Luten
Mike Casella Christa Capozzola Doug Kramer Lisa Gomer Debbie Kennedy-Iraheta
Elizabeth Kolmstetter Larry Garber Amie Batson Katie Taylor Andy Herscowitz
Kit Batten Chris Holmes Mark Brinkmoeller Susan Markham Todd Larson
Patricia Rader Wade Warren Christie Vilsack

U.S. Agency For International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

T 202.712.4810 | F 202.216.3524

@USAID | @rajshah

facebook.com/usaid

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Cover photo: Students greet Administrator Shah in the West Bank village of Harmala, where USAID helped build a new primary school and expand the health care center.

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